

THE GLORIES
OF
NORTHERN FRANCE



T. FRANCIS BUMPUS

WILLIAM MCGEE,
Bookseller,
18 NASSAU STREET,
DUBLIN.

THE
GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

SUMMER HOLIDAYS
AMONG THE
GLORIES OF NORTHERN
FRANCE

HER CATHEDRALS AND CHURCHES

BY

T. FRANCIS BUMPUS

Author of "London Churches Ancient and Modern"

"Holiday Rambles among the Cathedrals and Churches of North Germany"

"Stained Glass in England since the Gothic Revival" etc., etc.

WITH 110 ILLUSTRATIONS

"Quam dilecta tabernacula Tua, Domine virtutum"

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SUMMER HOLIDAYS

AMONG THE

GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

INTRODUCTORY

THE subject of ancient architecture in France—more exact than that of our own country in certain districts—is one of inexhaustible interest and extent. Grand as it is, and as has a few recent works of attention among ourselves, French architecture has not been systematically studied or regarded as we have to do with a good deal, for while the cathedrals and churches of France are generally smiling, unscathed as a more genuine style than our own, they present fewer varieties, and windings of style, beauty being less interesting than variety, and it may also be added less profits and losses.

It was not until the nineteenth century that France was composed out of a number of States or divisions each distinguished by particular traits were retained long after their provinces were welded together under St. Louis and Philippe-Auguste into a kingdom, which then, as now, had far to secure the fit de France, i.e. the country immediately surrounding Paris. Even when this was accomplished these provinces retained much that was peculiar even to their architecture, so that in this respect as the present day even affords a distinct field for the pursuit of ecclesiology, as well as differences arising between the Romanesque of Provence and Normandy, and the First Pointed of Alsace and Burgundy, as between the Early English of Wales Cathedral and the Yorkshire abbey, the Perpendicular of Somerset and that of the Eastern Counties.

The Société des Monuments Historiques has published an architectural map of France, showing it to have been the scene of no fewer than thirteen provincial styles. Most important among these are the style of the fit de France or Norman-Royal, the style of Normandy, those of Burgundy and Auvergne.

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that of Provence ; of Languedoc, Poitou, and Saintonge, all included in Aquitania ; the Angevine style, marking a small district on both sides the Loire between Aquitaine and Normandy ; and, lastly, though not a very important one, that of the extreme north-east bordering on the Rhine and Belgium. Gradually blending tints in lieu of sharp lines explain the boundaries of these styles, which in some instances overlap each other, for the influence of each province was felt by its neighbours, and this most forcibly in frontier regions.

Beginning with the South of France, it may be observed that the long continuance of Roman civilisation there, and, as a natural consequence, the large number of buildings erected in imitation of Roman remains, besides the early existence of a colony of Greeks who left numerous churches, Byzantine in plan and construction, are sufficient reasons for our finding the greater part of its cathedrals and churches Romanesque in style. But it would be tedious to indicate the various niceties and distinctions existing between the Romanesque of Provence and of the Auvergnat, between the Transition of Aquitaine and of Anjou ; briefly, therefore, the architectural peculiarities of these provinces must be pointed out, leaving the reader to glean more detailed information from Fergusson's "Ancient and Mediæval Architecture," one of those fascinating books which can only be laid aside with reluctance when once in hand, or from Petit's "Architectural Studies in France." The special value of the latter was that it opened to the architect and ecclesiologist several new and unusually rich fields of study, such as the Touraine and the Auvergnat, with the advantage of an intelligent practical commentary on the examples adduced. The larger number of illustrations were engraved on wood from the drawings of Delamotte, and these with respect to scientific accuracy and artistic beauty leave nothing to be desired. Other plates are anastatic reproductions of the author's own sketches—too roughly and hastily executed to be useful in matters of detail, but so admirable in their representation of broad outlines and general picturesque effects as to render the subjects recognisable in a moment ; a view across the nave of the cathedral at Autun, St. Basile at Etampes, St. Sernin at Toulouse, and the church at Langrune, near Caen, being a few among the subjects that engaged Petit's fertile pencil.

Like the Romanesque architects of Rhenish Germany, those of the southern French divisions—Provence, for example, with Arles for its centre—were content with their style, giving themselves up to its refinement, and not striving after fresh developments, as was the case with their northern neighbours. For, as with the Germans, the complete Gothic does not seem to have been imported here until the thirteenth century was far advanced, and then it was neither so perfectly understood nor practised with the success observable in the northern



ANGOULÊME CATHEDRAL
(Early Gothic of Western France)

INTRODUCTORY

regions. One of the first churches of central France in which it appeared is that of Notre-Dame at Clermont-Ferrand, whose choir is a very grandiose example almost rivalling Amiens in size; other specimens confronting us in the apsidal chapels of the cathedral at Bordeaux, in portions of St. Etienne at Limoges, in the cognominal church at Toulouse, in Notre-Dame at Bayonne, and at Mende, Perpignan, Rodez, Saint Dié, and Carcassonne.

The Romanesque and Transitional architecture of southern France, with its imitation of classical detail, its domical roofs, barrel vaults, and speluncar character, may be said to extend considerably above that generally acknowledged architectural boundary line—the Loire—as far as Le Mans, where we see it in the church of Notre-Dame de la Couture, and in the opposite direction as far as Langres. Within the limits of Provence, which occupies the whole valley of the Rhone as far as Lyons and along the coast between the hills and the sea towards the Pyrenees, there is barely one church that can be called Gothic. Some are so purely Romanesque that, although they date but from the age of Charlemagne, they rival some of the finest buildings of imperial Rome in classical purity of detail. Others show a more Gothic tendency, as, for instance, St. Trophimus at Arles with its noble porch and its cloisters, which, as well as those at Fontfroide, are lovely specimens of Romanesque work in which their architects revelled in freedom from restraint, and where parsimony of care and pains is imperceptible. The churches of Alai, Aix, Cuxa, St. Gilles, and Tarascon are remarkable chiefly for their porches, while a lovely doorway in the fortress-like church of Maguelone has quite a Saracenic air.

In Aquitaine, the richest field for the study of the Romanesque of that province is the department of Charente, with Angoulême for its centre. What an architectural feast is here spread forth by such churches as Châtres, Monthiers, St. Amand de Boixe, Roulet, Trois Palis, Plassac, and La Palud, gloomily grand structures upon whose western façades their architects lavished so much skill!

Still further south we find Périgueux, Roulet, and Souillac, and the vast five-aisled St. Sernin at Toulouse. Round arches and tunnel vaults, pointed arches and domical roofs are features peculiar to the churches of this province—more remarkable, perhaps, for grandeur of conception than for the success which has attended their achievement.

Proceeding northwards, we find in Poitou, Anjou, and Touraine, with their capitals, Poitiers, Angers, and Tours, a much more delicate handling of both Romanesque and Pointed forms than in Aquitaine. Some may think that the absence of aisles tends to rob many of these Romanesque and Transitional Angevine churches of that mystery derivable from the interminable perspective of

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the piers and arcades of the more advanced Pointed examples. The cathedral of Angers, St. Martin and La Trinité in the same city ; Blois, Loches, Poitiers, and Fontevrault are noble types of Angevine First Pointed.

The Auvergnat Romanesque—a school with as distinct and marked a tradition of its own as that of the Rhine, Lombardy, and Normandy—is extremely beautiful. The western narthex, with or without a gallery, and the apsidal east end with one pair of chapels to the north-east, another to the south-east, and an apse to each transept on its eastern face, are characteristic features of churches in this part of France.

They are, however, unlike Noyon or Tournai, rarely or never transverse triapsidal. Issoire, Notre-Dame du Port at Clermont-Ferrand, the Cathedral of Le Puy, and St. Etienne at Nevers—the last somewhat distant, but partaking of all the peculiarities of the Auvergnat style of Romanesque—are specimens most worthy of citation. Another feature in the churches of the Auvergnat is the use in their construction of different coloured materials for external ornamentation, such as tiles inlaid in stone in the face of the wall, patterns formed of white stones and black lava from the neighbouring volcanic region—a system of natural polychromy very grateful and refreshing to the eye.

There is no doubt that the magnificent Roman monuments preserved in Arles, Nîmes, and Orange gave something of a Classical character to the church architecture in their own neighbourhood—a peculiarity to be found in such churches of the dioceses suffragan to Lyons as Autun, Langres, Saint-Claude, and Grenoble. In the naves of Autun and Langres cathedrals the pointed arches separating them from the aisles spring from fluted pilasters with Corinthian capitals. Ionic columns appear in the apse of the Cathedral at Lyons, and Corinthian ones, fluted, support pointed arches in the apse at Beaune, between Dijon and Autun. At the angles of the octagon of Avignon and in the tower of the abbey at Tournus, Corinthian pilasters occur ; indeed, the Auvergnat and Burgundian churches present manifold examples of Classicism, which, by the way, must not be confused with the vandalisms committed during the eighteenth century in the apses of Paris, Bayeux, Fécamp, Lisieux, Chartres, and other northern cathedrals.

Burgundy is a most interesting province architecturally ; indeed, its Early Pointed style, as exemplified in the abbey church of Pontigny, the choir of St. Etienne at Auxerre and Vézelay, and the churches of Semur and Notre-Dame at Dijon, is quite *sui generis*. In the last-named city the original cathedral of St. Benigne was one of the oldest in Burgundy, and doubtless afforded an excellent example of the Romanesque of that province ; but its total destruction at the Revolution, and the insufficiency of plates illustrating it, published by



WEST FRONT OF THE CATHEDRAL, ANGERS
(Angevine School)

INTRODUCTORY

Dom Plancher, preclude our gaining any satisfactory idea of it. Open western porches of great height, with or without storeys above them, as at Autun, Beaune, and Notre-Dame, Dijon, and used through all the ages of Pointed; great ante-churches or narthexes, as at Vézelay; absence of aisles to the apse, but the employment of smaller apses on the eastern sides of transepts; closed triforia; and the cylindrical column, with its stiff-leaved capital, are among the most prominent peculiarities of Burgundian Gothic.

The abbeys of Cîteaux and Cluny, Pontigny, Charité-sur-Loire, Tournus, and Vézelay attest the fact that Burgundy, like Yorkshire, early became the favourite resort of religious, who founded here those great monastic houses which spread their influence, not only over France, but over the whole of Europe, controlling to a most extraordinary extent all the relations of mediæval European society.

Some of these great establishments have almost entirely disappeared; for example, Cîteaux and Cluny. The church of the latter was the grandest in Europe, being within a few feet as large as St. Peter's at Rome, and possessing five aisles, double transepts, and seven towers.

Pontigny, Tournus, Vézelay, and Souvigny—the last, by the way, is in the Bourbonnais, but it may not inappropriately enter into this great group—still retain their enormously long churches, but the busy courts which once surrounded them now lie desolate.

In the provinces neighbouring to Burgundy, *i.e.*, Berri, the Nivernais, the Bourbonnais, Touraine, Maine, and the Orléannais—provincialisms, although they may present themselves to the practised eye, must not be looked for in the cathedrals of Bourges, Nevers, Tours, Le Mans, and Chartres, which belong to the great church-rebuilding ages, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but among the churches of the smaller towns and villages.

Those of Blois, Loches, and Meung in the Touraine present specimens of First Pointed detail hardly surpassed for elegance of effect and delicacy of execution. Both here and in the contiguous Orléannais we meet with the square eastern termination, as in St. Julien and Notre-Dame-la-Riche at Tours, and in three of those fine churches which render Etampes so delightful a place for a brief sojourn. Churches in the Orléannais, especially in that district of it known as La Beauce, cluster almost as thickly as in Leicestershire. Travelling from Orleans to Etampes—whose churches, by the way, seem to form a sort of frontier line between the architecture of northern and southern France—the almost universal saddleback steeples of its village churches form the only relief to a *pays ennuyeux*, as La Fontaine termed this, the granary of France.

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The tedium of the railway journey across the monotonous plains of Picardy, French Flanders, and Champagne is relieved by the great churches of Abbéville, Amiens, Beauvais, St. Quentin, St. Omer, Tournai, Rheims, Meaux, Châlons, Langres, Sens, and Troyes. Generally speaking, the predecessors of these glories of France have made way for larger and more splendid buildings which the increasing wealth and population of their cities demanded. Tournai, however, retains its peculiar Romanesque nave and its apsidal Transitional transepts, while the choir and transepts of Beauvais, respectively Geometrical and Flamboyant, soar above the severely simple ninth-century *basse œuvre*.

In Champagne there is hardly a town or large village whose churches will not repay the trouble of breaking the journey, especially those with which the banks of the Marne between Rheims and Meaux are studded.

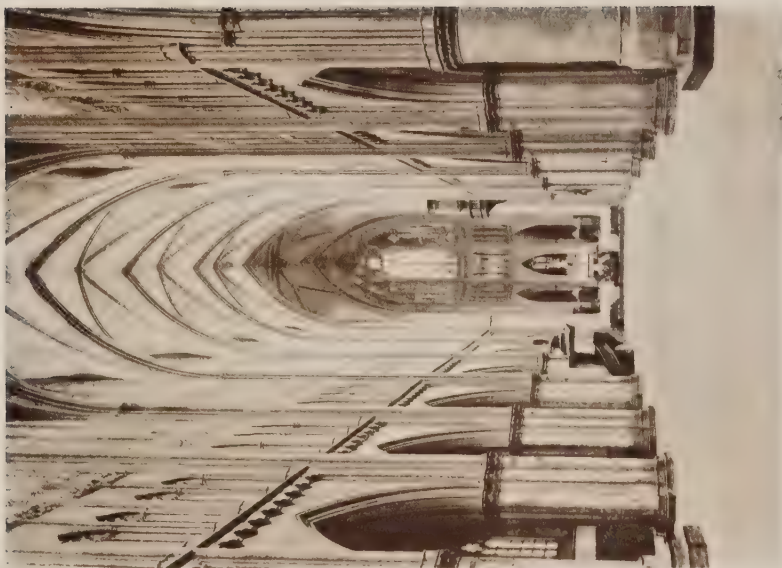
Of early Champenois Gothic the three finest examples are the choirs of Notre-Dame at Châlons-sur-Marne, St. Remi at Rheims, and the church at Montier-en-Der near Vassy. The two former are almost identical in plan and construction, Rheims and Montier-en-Der retaining their solemn Romanesque naves with low arcades and vast triforia.

The apse of the cathedral at Meaux, twenty-eight miles from Paris, is truly noble and preferred by some to its prototype at Amiens, and although so near the capital is singularly little known or visited.

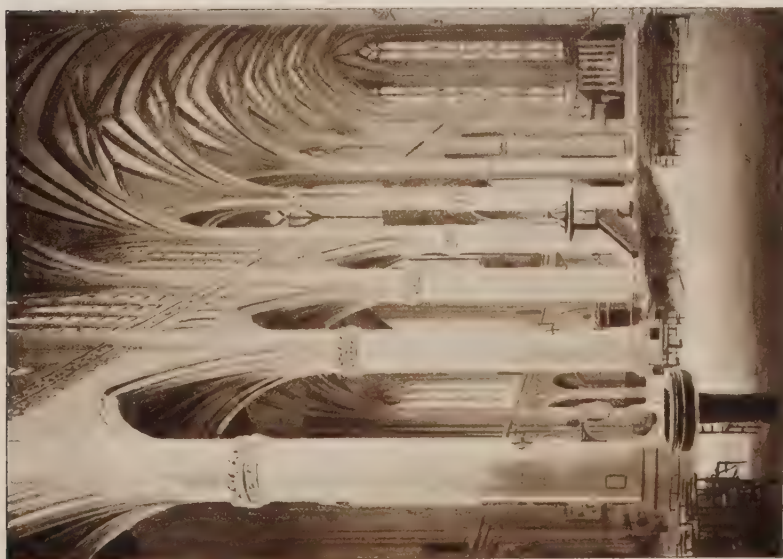
The cathedral of Châlons is a fine specimen of Geometrical Decorated, but certain features, notably the imposing range of isolated cylindrical columns and the position of the towers to the east of the transept, have a very German appearance; indeed, Teutonisms are more or less apparent in the majority of the churches in this north-east corner of France neighbouring to the Rhine and Belgium. The long, aisleless choir of another church at Châlons, that of St. Loup, ending in a three-sided apse, recalls Belgian and German examples of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, as does the spacious church of St. Maurice at Lille, with its five aisles separated from each other by tall cylindrical columns of the most graceful character. Five miles east of Châlons is Notre-Dame de l'Épine, perhaps the loveliest creation of the mediæval architect on French soil: the windows exhibit a curious mingling of Geometrical and Flowing tracery; it possesses that rare feature in France—a rood-screen, and is in fact a structure that has given rise to no little speculation as to the nationality of its designer.

Further eastward we have the cathedrals of Toul and Metz, whose doubtful locale creates a feeling of diffidence in the mind when assigning them a nationality. The ground-plan of Metz, with the procession path and radiating chapels around its chevet, is French, while the exaggeration of the clerestory at

INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL OF SEVILLE



INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL OF SEVILLE



INTRODUCTORY

the expense of the aisles is a feature essentially German. The cathedral of Magdeburg offers an example of this: the side aisles there being practically little more than one-third of the whole height of the church, and there being no triforium arcade, a disagreeable effect is created by the portion of unrelieved wall-space intervening between the apex of the nave arcade and the string-course below the clerestory windows. At Metz this space is richly arcaded and the openings glazed, but there is no triforium passage of any depth. Fascinating as this arrangement may appear, sober reason tells us that such vagaries should not be attempted externally; but within, this defect is partly neutralised by the perspective and by the rich old stained-glass which not a few of the windows in this part of the church have succeeded in retaining. There is a wealth of detail in Metz Cathedral, especially in its foliated ornament, and to the traveller who sees it after the poor Middle Pointed work of the Rhine provinces the relief is most agreeable; but should he approach the capital of Lorraine through so richly church-districted a district as the Ile de France he will experience a feeling akin to disappointment, which is, however, to some extent compensated for by the vastness and *élan* character of this, the most imposing structure of its class in Europe. I have selected this view of the imposing church of St. Nicholas de Port as illustrating that fusion of the French and German methods to which I have drawn attention. Churches of its type are common in north-eastern France, more particularly in the debatable provinces of Alsace-Lorraine, in the latter of which, near to Toul and Nancy, St. Nicholas is situated.

The lofty lantern-like choir, with its aisleless apse, is quite Teutonic in spirit; the nave, while presenting certain Germanicisms in detail, is, as regards its elevation, thoroughly French. A curious feature here is the manner in which the cruciform plan is to some extent neutralised by the division of the transept into two bays by a central column—an arrangement that is only a reproduction on a grandiose scale of one met with in the late twelfth-century abbey church of St. Jean au Bois, near Compiègne, and in the thirteenth-century collegiate one of St. Maurice at Epinal, in the Vosges, of which to become a chanoinesse or *demoiselle d'Epinal* it was necessary to prove four generations of noble fathers and mothers.¹ This two-bayed transeptal arrangement is to be found in other churches of north-eastern France besides the examples quoted. Among them may be named Valentigney and Vendeuvre, in the department of Aube; Roberval, Fresnoy-Rivière, Vauciennes and Verberie

¹ A somewhat similar rule existed with regard to the German nunneries of Essen, Herford, and Quedlinburg.

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in that of Oise; and Brunembert in the Pas de Calais. A parallel English example of this feature occurs in the eastern transept or Chapel of the Nine Altars at Fountains.

In the Troyes district of Champagne we find a peculiar type of Flamboyant pervading the town and village churches, its leading characteristics being absence of capitals to the piers, the arch ribs dying off into them, and of foliation or cusping to the reticulated tracery of its windows. To an English eye, accustomed to the richness of our contemporary Perpendicular, such work appears tame and nerveless, but there is much that is grand and imposing about the scale of these churches, while a certain amount of picturesqueness has been secured for them by the retention of their old fittings, benches with tall straight open backs being used in lieu of chairs.

In the city of Troyes churches cluster almost as thickly as in Cologne. Not a few of them are rich in old stained-glass, but especially that gem of thirteenth-century Gothic, the unfinished church of St. Urbain. The vitreous decoration of the cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul in the same city is unusually splendid; indeed, nowhere in Europe can mediæval glass be seen in such profusion and magnificence as in the French cathedrals north of the Loire.

The towns of Melun, Montereau, and Pont-sur-Yonne, occurring on the line of route from Paris to Sens, contain much interesting work, as do Joigny and St. Florentin, which are passed in going from the latter archiepiscopal city to Auxerre. The Early Renaissance in the churches of Joigny and St. Florentin is particularly rich and interesting. Troyes and Châlons can be reached either from St. Florentin, a route of comparatively recent opening, or by the older and more interesting one from Sens, passing through Villers l'Archevêque, where a few hours will not be deemed misspent. But in addition to these accessible Champenois examples there are many others lying off the beaten track, as, for instance, the noble thirteenth-century church of Rampillon, two-and-a-half miles from the station at Nangis, on the line of railway from Paris to Mulhouse. Vullon, with apsidally terminated aisles, is another gem; Thil Chatel has a noble Romanesque portal; St. Laurent, Nogent sur Seine, has much interesting Early Renaissance work; at Rosnay is a fine Late Decorated crypt; while at Villenaux is a rarity in the shape of a Late Gothic rood-screen. In fact there is hardly a Champenois village or small town in which something interesting and instructive in ecclesiastical art cannot be seen.

We now come to the Ile de France, a small province, it is true, but enshrining within it some of the noblest buildings of the Middle Ages. Much fine work will be found in the Seine-side village churches lining the railway from Paris to Mantes, but these are eclipsed in architectural splendour and importance

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by those along the Oise, for the exploration of which the town of Creil—itsself not wholly uninteresting in an ecclesiological point of view—will be found an admirable centre. And not for these only, but for the beautiful architecture of the country of the Soissonnais, the cradle of Early Pointed French Gothic, will Creil be found a convenient *point de départ*—Senlis, Compiègne, Noyon, Laon, Soissons, and Braisne all being within easy reach. As a whole the village church architecture of France may be said to fall far below that of England, but the succession of churches alluded to above as standing on the banks of the Oise—St. Leu d'Esserent, Champagne, Persan-Beaumont, and Auvers, together with others of equally beautiful detail—is probably surpassed only by that glorious line extending all the way from Sleaford to King's Lynn, or by that remarkable Nene Valley series between Wellingborough and Peterborough. The above-mentioned line of churches is met, going Paris-wards from Creil. In the direction of Beauvais are the contiguous villages of Cires and Mello, each with a noble and refined specimen of Early Pointed, while a short walk from Creil brings the ecclesiologist to Nogent-les-Vierges and Villers St. Paul. In all these churches the late twelfth and early thirteenth century Gothic of France can be seen in perfection.

But of all the French provinces, that of Normandy, from the fact of its history having been for so many years interwoven with that of his own country, is to an Englishman indubitably the most interesting architecturally. Perhaps nowhere in France do we see all the styles brought to such a degree of perfection as in this, the most delightful of her provinces. The Romanesque style of Normandy must not, however, be looked for in its capital, the cathedral of Rouen and other churches of that enchanting city having been rebuilt during the First and Middle Pointed epochs. But in the department of Calvados it is difficult to point to a village that does not present a specimen of "Norman" work, as for instance Bernières, Fontaine le Henri, Bieville, Thann, and Fresne Camilly, all within easy distance of Caen, which, with its two great mainly Romanesque abbatial churches of St. Etienne and La Trinité, and its desecrated St. Nicholas, is quite a mine of study. Other large and important specimens of Norman work are the abbey church of Montivilliers and the humbler St. Honorine at Gravelle, near Havre; Cerisy, between Bayeux and St. Lô; St. Georges de Bocherville, near Rouen; and the collegiate church of St. Hildevert at Gournay, in the Pays du Bray, on the line of railway from Dieppe to Beauvais, and richest of all in the nave of Bayeux.

The First Pointed of Normandy is represented on the noblest scale in Rouen, the most picturesque, if not the most perfect, of French cathedrals, with its strikingly dissimilar western towers whose prolongation beyond the line of

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the aisles, as at Wells, gives such majesty to the façade ; its glorious transeptal roses ; its nave with quadruple division of height, as at Paris, Laon, and Noyon, and its graceful clusters of slender shafts ; its triforium stage open to the aisles, a Normandy feature found also at Eu ; its wealth of old painted-glass, and its elongated Lady-chapel.

Next in point of size and completeness stand the lovely cathedral of Coutances and the once cathedral church of St. Pierre at Lisieux. Other early thirteenth-century work of a style quite its own, which for delicacy and refinement can hardly be surpassed, is found in the nave clerestory and the whole choir of Bayeux cathedral ; the choir of St. Etienne at Caen ; the nave and west porches of Séez cathedral ; the minster-like church of Eu, near Tréport ; the transepts and choir arcades of St. Jacques, Dieppe ; Fécamp and St. Germer's abbey churches ; the choir, transepts, and tower of Norrey church, between Caen and Bayeux ; and the steeples, with their elongated belfry stages, of St. Pierre, St. Jean, and St. Sauveur, Caen ; of Bretteville, near Norrey, and of Bernières and Langrune, both on the sea coast, about ten miles from Caen.

Geometrical Decorated of a very high order occurs in the transepts at Bayeux ; in the side chapels to the naves of Coutances and Rouen cathedrals ; in the transepts and choir of Séez ; in St. Etienne-le-Vieux (now desecrated) at Caen ; in the exquisite Sainte Chapelle at the east end of St. Germer's abbey, a contemporary of the Parisian one, and doubtless from the same hand ; and on the grandest scale of all in the church of St. Ouen at Rouen—one of the very few great French churches which, erected during the latter half of the thirteenth century, fill up the gap between the period when religious art had attained its highest excellence, and that which saw its decline ere the fifteenth was very far advanced.

Perhaps there is no part of the Continent in which the Flamboyant Gothic may be seen worked with such a degree of refinement combined with vigour as Normandy. Examples are numerous, but it is necessary to mention only the western façade of Rouen cathedral ; St. Maclou in the same city ; the church of Caudebec, on the Seine between Rouen and Havre ; the porches at Harfleur and Louviers ; the tower of the Madeleine at Verneuil, and the upper portion of the nave of St. Jacques, Dieppe.

From Normandy we pass into Brittany, which, in architecture, as in everything else, seems to have been behind the rest of France, though portions of the churches of Dinan, Dol, Folgoat, Guingamp, Nantes, Quimper, St. Pol de Léon, and Treguier are fine. Specimens of Romanesque or Early Pointed are rare, and much discrimination is required in fixing the dates of buildings, many



CHEVET, NOTRE-DAME DU PORT, CLERMONT-FERRAND
(Auvergne School)



CHEVET, ST. BENOIT-SUR LOIRE
(Auvergne School)

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of them having an air and style more ancient than they really are. The use of granite as a material is very frequent. Flamboyant, of a peculiar type, is the style *par excellence* of this corner of France, while the English look pervading many of the details and plans, and the manner in which so large a number of churches have retained their ancient primitive furniture, delight the antiquary, the ecclesiologist, and the lover of the picturesque. In the rood-lofts of Folgoat, St. Fiacre, and Lambader we find a minuteness and delicacy of carving, especially in the foliated ornament, hard to find among the works of an earlier and purer age. Its roadside crosses are a feature of Brittany: hardly a single point of intersection of two roads can be passed which is not marked by a cross—more or less mutilated—oftentimes restored by the piety of recent generations.

The study of Northern Gothic presents no point more interesting than the cardinal distinction between the square eastern ends of our cathedrals, the chevets of France, and the apses of Germany. In England, where the apse may be said to have fallen into desuetude with the disappearance of the round arch at the close of the twelfth century, an elongated form of transept with a view to additional altar space was introduced. In France, where radiating chapels were always in vogue, the transepts were usually short. This gives the *rationale* of the lengthened transepts of England. The developed Gothic chevets of Amiens, Chartres, Rheims, Tours, Troyes and other cathedrals which continued in use down to the latest days of the style, perhaps found its earliest Pointed expression in the simple Cistercian nun's-coif like one of Pontigny, whose parentage may be traced in the Auvergnat Romanesque of Issoire, Notre-Dame du Port, Clermont-Ferrand, and St. Etienne at Nevers; in the Aquitanian of La Charité and Benoit-sur-Loire, Conques and St. Sernin, Toulouse, two of the earliest examples of the chevet; in the Burgundian variety of that protean style at Paray-le-Monial, St. Menoux, near Souvigny—where the graceful fourteenth-century apse of its interesting Cluniac abbey church affords an instance of the disuse of the triforium—and the once glorious Cluny; in the Champenois cathedral of Langres; and in the churches of Notre-Dame de la Coûture and St. Julian des Prés at Le Mans, where, as at Etampes, we seem to perceive a sort of frontier line between the northern and southern architecture of France.¹

¹ It must not be concluded from this that the simple aisleless Romanesque apse in France was entirely superseded by the chevet. Such examples as the great Norman churches of Boscherville, the Abbaye aux Dames at Caen, and Cerisy le Forêt, St. Front, Périgueux, Loches, Agen and a host of minor ones in the south-west—notably in the district of La Charente—are sufficient to disprove this.

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These in their turn may be traced back to that simple large niche or semi-dome of the basilica, which in Germany¹ reproduced itself down to the latest days of national Pointed, as shewn in the lantern-like choirs of Münster, Soëst, Erfurt and Mülhausen.

Here and there we find such choirs as those of Magdeburg, Schwerin, Cologne and Freiburg im Breisgau cathedrals, the abbey at Altenberg, St. Mary, Lübeck, and other great brick churches of the Baltic provinces, planned on the French model,² but the system never became generally accepted, or except in Cologne, perfectly understood, one reason for the pertinacity of its rejection being regard for the strict orientation of altars, which was nowhere, save among ourselves, more rigidly adhered to than in Germany. When additional altar space was required it was met by giving an apsidal termination to the choir aisles, as for instance in St. Mary and St. Elizabeth at Mülhausen and St. Mary in the Meadows at Soëst, or by doubling the aisles, as at St. John at Lüneburg and St. Victor at Xanten; and although in some of the Pomeranian churches chapels are occasionally to be discovered flanking the nave aisles, the practice does not appear to have become at all popular except in debased times, and then chiefly in churches of the South, where the principles of the Reformation made but little headway.

In some instances, when additional altars were required, they were reared against the western sides of the nave piers, as at Augsburg, Münster and Würzburg cathedrals. At Münster the retables of these nave altars are very pleasing specimens of Renaissance architecture. In the other examples they are either poor modern Gothic or pseudo-Classical.

There is such a strong family likeness in the apses of those churches built during that single half-century (c. 1180-1230), which filled the length and breadth of France with structures of prodigious scale and impressive grandeur, that even the most conversant with their individual differences may pardonably mistake the east end of Mantes for that of St. Leu d'Esserent, and that of Notre-Dame at Châlons-sur-Marne for St. Remi at Rheims. In fact, all over Northern France the student is constantly meeting something he has seen

¹ As at St. Patroclus and St. Nicholas, Soëst; St. Blasius, Brunswick; Gernrode, Hecklingen, St. Mary at Halberstadt, and the church of the Neuwerks at Goslar; Jerichow in Brandenburg, Ratzeburg in Pomerania, and the grand series of Rhenish basilicas.

² The cathedral of Limburg on the Lahn, and the churches of Stargard, Wismar, St. Mary at Worms and Osnabrück afford instances, *inter alia*, of the semi-French plan, viz. a clerestoried choir with procession path, but no radiating chapels. Occasionally in Germany we find the tall unclerestoried apse provided with an ambulatory, as, for instance, the cathedral of Werden in Hanover, St. Paul, Brandenburg, St. Mary-the-Great, Lippstadt, and St. Sebald, Nuremberg, but, externally at least, with not very happy results.



APSE, ST. ANDREW, COLOGNE.
(Late German.)



DOFFPALT
(Rhinisch Apsis, Early Thirteenth Century)

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before. On the contrary, in the great churches of England, notwithstanding the almost universal adoption of the square eastern termination, the great variety in its treatment makes confusion of one with another well nigh impossible.

The French apse being not infrequently polygonal, the piers round it are of necessity placed very near together, and that the arches may range with those of the choir they are often much stilted. This is most observable in the chevets of Amiens, Beauvais, Chartres, Le Mans, Soissons and Tours. In Notre-Dame at Paris, St. Etienne at Auxerre, St. Etienne at Caen, and the cathedral at Bayeux, this elongation has been avoided either by giving the apse only three sides or by constructing its outer ones at a less acute angle.

A good idea of the French and English character may be gathered from a study of their respective architecture.

Without indulging in that indiscriminate eulogy which forces one to exhaust every interjection in the dictionary expressing admiration of everything big, and anything belonging to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, it is impossible to dilate with sufficient enthusiasm upon the exquisite art of the French churches, upon the skill observable in the disposition of their ground plans—perhaps unequalled elsewhere—upon the vigorous beauty of their sculpture, and upon the combined boldness and lightness of the art in nearly all the buildings of the best period, at least in those of the *Domaine Royal*, Burgundy, Champagne, Picardy, and Normandy.

But that regard for the unities which elicits one's admiration in the art, literature, and drama of France seems, somehow, to be lacking in her ecclesiastical architecture. Magnificent and awe-inspiring though the French churches be—from *Gris Nez* in the north to the *Pyrenees* in the south, from *Bordeaux* in the south-west to *Metz* in the north-east—it cannot be said that, externally at least, there is a single great church that succeeds in satisfying the mind like *Beverley*, *Exeter*, *Lincoln*, *Salisbury*, or *Wells*. English architects obtained their impressive effects from length and lowness. Indeed, their reticence in this respect not only allowed them to play with their outlines by introducing an eastern pair of transepts, but enabled their towers to bear due relation to the masses they surmount and to be carried on to completion. Where in France, except perhaps in the Departments bordering on the English Channel, has the architect been able to produce a group of steeples comparable in beauty and completeness with those of *Canterbury*, *Durham*, *Lichfield*, *Lincoln*, or *York*? For the ambitious scale upon which so many of her churches were conceived has, save in a few instances, precluded their equipment with steeples of sufficient dimensions either to relieve their enormous masses or to impart true dignity and picturesqueness of outline.

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Again, while there are certain of the great French churches exceeding our own in length, they do not appear so long, either from their great height, or from the absence of a high, open or close rood-loft. Nearly all the ancient examples of this feature, together with other mediæval *instrumenta* of worship, disappeared from France during the religious troubles of the sixteenth century, or under the misdirected zeal of the clergy themselves in the eighteenth, and not having been equipped like our own cathedrals and parish churches with modern works of the kind, the majority of the great French churches lack that air of mystery and impressiveness which constitutes so charming a feature of English religious edifices and of such in Germany where piety has retained or reinstated the rood.

On the other hand there are features in the great French churches to which those of our own land can lay no claim—their portals “scooped into the depth and darkness of Elijah’s Horeb cave” and lined with sculptural effigies, not always well proportioned, it must be confessed, to their façades; their chevets with graceful coronæ of chapels; their rose windows, and their wealth of ancient painted-glass—a wealth surprising when the fanaticism of the Huguenots, the vitiated taste of the Louis Quinze period, and the fury of the Great Revolution are in turn reflected upon.

Comparing the historic interest, architecturally, of the generality of the French cathedrals with that of our own, it must be admitted that while ours are as a rule less valuable as monuments of one great church building epoch—the re-edification, enlargement, and embellishment of them extending over several centuries, whereas in France the majority of her great cathedrals were completed in all essentials ere the thirteenth century had more than half passed away—the blending of one style with another has always been so much more felicitously accomplished with us as to render an English cathedral such a constant source of delight and endless field for study and research as, with all its grandioseness, a French one can hardly claim to be. Indeed, in certain instances, as in the façades of Paris and Sens, the combination of styles has been far from satisfactorily achieved.

It is interesting to observe the relative situations of our own and the French churches, we ever evincing a love of the beautiful and picturesque when selecting a site for religious edifices, thus securing for them, even when in a crowded town, that hallowed *temenos* which is rarely, if ever, met with in the environments of those of our neighbours across the Channel. In France, where the majority of the great churches rise sheer from a market-place or a stony street, it is difficult to meet with a cathedral retaining, in anything like completeness, those environments of cloister, chapter-house, bishop’s palace, and residentiary houses

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which almost everywhere in England have been preserved—dependencies whose inferior proportions make the central monument tell to still greater advantage.

The grandeur of the great French churches, like all earthly grandeur, requires points of comparison in order to be more thoroughly appreciated. Absolute isolation would be fatal to a French cathedral, and although, in the absence of our English entourages, it was not right at Rouen and elsewhere to permit of the erection of parasitical secular tenements, there was something undoubtedly picturesque in the manner in which the French churches rose above the crowded dwellings and the narrow streets of the ancient cities, dominating and raising our imaginations by their colossal proportions—symbols of the truth and authority of a Church of which each cathedral was its image in stone.

With regard to the removal of the houses from around Rouen Cathedral of late years, M. Loth, an accomplished archæologist, picturesquely remarks:—

“La métropole Normande était, peut être, encore plus féérique, lorsque au lieu de se montrer à peu près toute dégagée, comme elle l’est aujourd’hui, elle émergeait du pittoresque Marché aux Fleurs installé sur son parvis, au sein d’un fouillis de maisons accrochées à ses flancs, et paraissait comme la synthèse de ce vieux Rouen aux cent clochers, aux hautes tours, aux Gothiques maisons de bois, qui faisait dire à Victor Hugo, au temps déjà lointain où l’on ne voyageait qu’en diligence :

“ . . . J’ai souvent fait ce rêve
De l’aller voir avant qu’on ne l’ait démoli.”

Unlike the great churches of Belgium and Germany, many of which are closed during the afternoon, those of France are open from early morn to dewy eve, and except in three instances—Rouen, St. Denis, and Paris, I believe—you may roam about them, choir aisles included, the livelong day, quite unchallenged by those nuisances a “visitors’ book” and a verger. It is needless to say that such freedom from restriction is a great boon to the student, while constituting one of the greatest charms of the French cathedrals.

Unfortunately our compatriots are disposed to abuse this liberty, and their peculiar manner of acting as if they were feudal lords coming amongst superstitious serfs imposes a strain on Gallic courtesy. Bearing in mind, therefore, that the procession path of a French church is generally tenanted by persons engaged in private devotion before the several altars in the chapels disposed around it, the English visitor should move about as noiselessly, and comport himself as reverently, as possible.

As a rule the matutinal Offices of Terce, Chapter or Canons’ Mass, and Sext will be found proceeding between nine and ten o’clock : the post-prandial ones of None, Vespers, and Compline between two and three, when, although no

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objection is raised to the visitor's perambulating the aisles, it is in better taste to take a chair, listen to the plain chant, and watch the ceremonial, which, in such cathedrals as Paris, Le Mans, Amiens, and Tours, is performed with much solemnity and decorum. The laity not being expected to participate in these offices, they are, as a rule, almost entirely unattended.

There are, however, a number of great French churches of what may architecturally be styled "the first class," in which no daily Offices—Low Mass, of course, excepted—can be attended or music heard except on a Sunday or a festival. Such are Auxerre, Laon, Lisieux, Noyon, Senlis, St. Omer, and Treguier—noble structures which, although of cathedral proportions, are now reduced to the rank of parish churches, and for their size very inadequately served ones. For at the Concordat of 1801, upon the re-establishment of religious order in France after nearly ten years of interdict following upon the Reign of Terror, the sees of which these grand churches formed the cathedrals were *inter plurima alia*—suppressed, the dioceses being so reconstituted that there should be one to each Department.

To have paced the aisles, then, of these Gothic Cathedrals, whose glories have been, it is to be feared, but inadequately portrayed in the ensuing chapters, is a matter of gratulation and contentment; and when it is explained that the continual use of the first person singular has perforce been dictated by the fact that the several tours in France of which these pages are descriptive were, from inability to meet with a travelling companion of sympathetic tastes, taken entirely alone, the reader will, it is to be hoped, peruse them with consideration, as the narrative of an appreciative and unprejudiced witness, rather than of an egotistical narrator.



ST. REMI, DIEPPE

CHAPTER I

DIEPPE, CAEN, AND BAYEUX

WHETHER the Channel passage has been agreeable or the reverse, it is always pleasant to find oneself sauntering across the sunny market-square of Dieppe, and to be presently standing beneath the Late Gothic tower of St. Jacques—one of its two minster-like churches. The exterior of this building is apparently almost entirely Flamboyant, but a closer inspection will reveal many beautiful details of earlier epochs, only requiring a quiet conservative restoration to bring them out in a more complete manner. St. Jacques is one of those many French churches which, as far as distribution of parts and general arrangements go, would pass with us for cathedrals, including in its ground plan a nave with lofty clerestory, aisles, flanking chapels, and nobly proportioned, but—like many another in France—unfinished south-west tower, rich in detail; transepts; and choir, with procession path, from which projects a well-developed Lady-chapel with tall transomed windows. The oldest parts of St. Jacques at Dieppe are the transepts and the arcade of the choir and apse, the latter being truly graceful specimens of French thirteenth-century work. Their clustering shafts and well-moulded arches are especially deserving of study. The next portion in order of date is the nave arcade, whose pillars are of a form very frequent in France, but rare with us, viz. cylindrical with a slender shaft at each cardinal point, the capitals of each being foliated. The tall clerestories of both nave and choir are noble features. That of the nave is of a far superior order of Middle Pointed to that of the eastern limb, where a deterioration in style is very palpable. As throughout Normandy, there is much Late Flamboyant and Early Renaissance work about St. Jacques, chiefly in the side chapels, where quaint features are the models of ships suspended as votive offerings. A quantity of mediocre painted glass very similar in drawing and tincture to that which Wailes used to place in Middle and Third Pointed churches at home, when not under the superintendence of an architect, or when it did not call for or secure peculiar exertions on his part, fills many windows in the lower parts of the church.

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An one of our most versatile writers has observed, the Later Flamboyant period of French Painting may not imaptly be termed an autumn. Every delicate shade has turned its fairest, every leaf has become puckered, and every flower has faded. All the splendour which precedes decay characterises the Flamboyant of France. It possesses none of the strength, vigour, or nerve of our English Perpendicular, but it is the perfection of abandon—light, frivolous, marvellously beautiful; in a word, thoroughly French.

One of the most curious and striking features of St. Jacques at Dieppe is found in a chapel at the west end of the south aisle, from which it is separated by an elaborate Late Gothic screen, viz. a group of statuary representing the Entombment. Our Lord is being placed in the sepulchre by Nicodemus and St. Joseph of Arimathea, and on the inner side of the tomb are the Holy Women and St. John the Evangelist, who supports the drooping figure of the Virgin. The figures are about life size, and by the light of some tapers placed by the faithful along the ceiling of a low galle, this solemn group has a truly weird effect to the spectator who encounters it for the first time. Its date is 1612, so says Huet, a French author writing in 1795, and it was executed at the expense of a pious traveller who returned from the Holy Land. This may be correct when it is borne in mind how accurately the work of better and purer epochs was reproduced in France at a period long posterior to the extinction of the Painted style, but anyone unaware of this fact would assign it to a date at least half a century earlier.

St. Jacques abounds in charming bits for the artist in the shape of Early Renaissance screens to the chapels opening from the processional aisle; indeed, the mere interest to those visiting France for the first time is a perfect revelation, and picturesque "views across" present themselves very frequently to the visitor. Dieppe possesses another church, generally overlooked by the savants and bookmakers, whose internal aspect, almost unchanged since the days of Wild and Comcy, must always please the artist more than the air of Parisian sanctities that pervades St. Jacques. I mean St. Remi, with its three Renaissance façades and its pewed, heavy-pillared, Flemish looking interior.

Like St. Jacques, St. Remi is cruciform, but of very Late Gothic. The choir was finished in 1545, but owing to the religious wars the nave was not completed until the seventeenth century was far advanced. Three grandiose fronts in the Louis XIV style contain the entrances, the western façade being particularly imposing. The choir of three bays has ponderous cylindrical piers, very tall, with coarsely foliated caps and arches very narrow and stilted. The arcades are

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so high as to admit of hardly any clerestory. There is some rich late stained glass in the apse clerestory with figures of bishops. The choir aisles open into chapels by very simple arches on piers without caps or bases, and of a type common in Late French Gothic. These are surmounted by a low clerestory. The four arches at the "crux" recall Worcester. A fine Renaissance screen opens into the last chapel from the south choir aisle, while another fences off the north west choir aisle from the transept. Westward the view is terminated by one of those imposing organ-cases so common in the north of France; one equally rich is in St. Jacques. The nave has huge cylindrical piers with plain uncarved caps and very small arches, the aisles opening into chapels by plain arcades surmounted by a clerestory, as in the choir—perhaps a humble imitation of the same arrangement at Coutances, Le Mans, and Bourges. In one of the Flamboyantly traceried north-aisle chapels is some rich stained glass (modern), with figures of Prophets and Evangelists. The baptistery, formed in the last chapel towards the west, is enclosed by a Renaissance screen whose door has a carving of the Infant Jesus in act of blessing. Altogether, St. Remi, although of debased architecture, is marvellously picturesque, and no one should leave Dieppe without paying it a visit.

By those visiting the north of France for the purpose of studying its ecclesiastical antiquities Dieppe will be found an admirable starting point. Given fine weather, a delightful trip may be made by omnibus, *viâ* St. Valéry-en-Caux, to Fécamp, with its cliff walks and glorious abbey church of La Trinité. In another direction lie the quaint fishing-town of Tréport, and within a short walk of it the great First Pointed church of Eu. Thence Amiens is easily reached. The railway line from Dieppe to Paris by Pontoise enables the ecclesiologist to visit Neuchâtel, Gournay, with the neighbouring abbey of St. Germer, Beauvais, Creil, and the beautiful Oise-side village churches of St. Leu, Champagne, and Auvers. Lastly, there is the route *viâ* Rouen, Louviers, Pont de l'Arche, and Mantes.

To the student of Norman village church architecture and life, no more charming day's excursion can be devised than a walk or cycle ride along the road between Dieppe and Rouen as far as Auffay, a pasture bordered streamlet—

" Wimpling, dimpling, staying never—
Lisping, gurgling, ever going,
Sipping, slipping, ever flowing,
Toying round the polished stone ; "

accompanying him the greater part of the way thither, and at sundry points of its sinuous course inviting a plunge.

Auffay has a fine cruciform church with circular columns, having stiff-leaved capitals, and apparently of the thirteenth century, but which I shrewdly suspect

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is, like the one at Triel, between Mantes and Paris, not quite so ancient as it looks, the work of earlier periods having been so successfully copied at later ones as to deceive the uninitiated. Unfortunately, the external view is spoilt by a clumsy modern spire. The saddleback would have had a far more pleasing appearance; but the fact of this type of steeple not being a localism in this district of Normandy may have militated against its adoption in this instance. At Malaunay carriages are changed for Havre, but the journey, though naturally delightful, is barren of architectural interest. Harfleur's noble crocketed spire and Graille's elevated square-ended Norman church—both close to Havre—however, reward us at the end of the journey, while Montivilliers, with its great Romanesque abbey church, equipped with a typical pair of Norman spires, lies a little inland, a short ride only from Graille. Notre-Dame at Havre, a curious mingling of Late Gothic and Palladian, seems hardly lofty enough for the head church of such a town, but it covers much ground, and those who are sufficiently liberal in their architectural ideas may spend a pleasant half-hour among its columned aisles. Despite its architectural solecisms, Notre-Dame de Havre-de-Grâce—to give it its full title—is pleasing. It has a long unbroken vista from the west door, terminating in the painted windows of the apse, whose tracery, like that throughout the church, partakes of the unfoliated Flamboyant character one sees in certain Oxford college chapels. There is a great deal of painted glass, some ancient, but all in the landscape style so dear to the artists of the Renaissance. The aisles and flanking chapels are separated from each other by isolated Tuscan pillars, those composing the nave arcade being half-circles attached to a square pier. Some grisaille glass in the clerestory, and in the small circular windows above either side entrance, is commendable. Externally, the unfinished south-west tower, with its clumsy crocketed pinnacles, does not assist in giving the church any extra height, dwarfed as it is by the huge houses in the Rue de Paris; indeed, taken all in all, the interior of this church is more imposing than the exterior; the one and the other respectively proving, by the comparative absence and presence of the quality, how especially effective height is in a town. Inside, there being no rival to distract attention from the positive proportions, the church pleases by its breadth and repose.

The sea trip from Havre to Caen is a very enjoyable one in fine weather, with which, on the occasion of this visit, I was favoured, and in about three hours—two and a half of which were spent in open sea, and the remainder in the Orne, or its canal—the towers and spires of Caen rising “above the houses in bold architectural masses,” causing the city to assume “a character of quiet monastic opulence, comforting the eye and the mind,” came into view affording promise of a rich architectural treat.

DIEPPE, CAEN, AND BAYEUX

I had, however, decided upon making a short stay at one of those bracing seaside resorts within a few miles of Caen before commencing my ecclesiological researches among its numerous and beautiful churches, selecting Bernières—a picturesque, scattered village—as being less sophisticated than the other watering places on the same line of coast. Bernières has a noble Late Norman and Early Pointed church, with a spire the work as of an angel architect, one of the most beautiful of those steeples which, built upon one general principle, seem to have been dispersed through a considerable distance round Caen. Some of them have been much mutilated—that at Langrune, for example—while those of Norrey and Audrieu are still incomplete. An excellent drawing of Bernières' spire will be found in Nesfield's "Continental Sketches;" also one of the graceful trefoil-headed doorway to the west porch. It would be difficult to select a more charming spot than this for a few days' quiet sojourn. To say nothing of the architectural treasures presented by almost every village church in the vicinity, there is in front the fine open sea, with its excellent bathing, while on the other side lies the rich, fertile tract of country, dotted with veritable Norman churches, between Caen and Bayeux. Then, should the weather prove unfavourable for country excursions, a short railway journey lands one in Caen, with its treasures of ecclesiastical art. Lisieux and Bayeux are also within easy reach; so that, altogether, no ecclesiologist need repine should bad weather overtake him at Bernières. The sole attraction of this somewhat decayed-looking village is its above-mentioned noble church, consisting of western steeple and projecting porch, nave, and lofty chancel, in common with many others in Normandy, square-ended. The aisles are carried alongside the tower to the extreme west. The nave, very rich Norman, bears marks of recent restoration. It is long and low, with lean-to aisles and lofty First Pointed north porch. The western tower, which is First Pointed, is in three stages; the two upper ones are lofty and enriched with four lancets, of which the two centre ones are pierced. The lower stage, which does not rise above the apex of the nave roof, has its north side relieved by a row of arcades broken by a traceried circle; the spire has open angle pinnacles and squinches, but is unrelieved by bands. The chancel, a good piece of First Pointed work, soars above the Romanesque nave, but it sadly wants restoration. Its western gable has flanking pinnacles and its windows consist of two unfoliated broad lights of a plate-traceried character. Internally the nave, entered from the tower by a Pointed arch of singular beauty, has a noble Norman arcade of six bays, and is groined, as are the aisles. Good open benches seat the nave, from which the chancel opens by a fine Norman arch; two graceful First Pointed arches open to the aisles, a Renaissance balustrade serving as triforium; the vaulting is rather depressed. On the north side

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of the sanctuary is a low arch surmounted by a trefoiled triforium arcade and a lofty clerestory, of which the upper part is pierced by a two-light window as in the choir. The foliated arcade alluded to above is carried round the east end, but is hidden in the centre by a tall Renaissance altar-piece of good workmanship, and although incongruous, better perhaps than the miserable modern Pointed reredoses one sees in French churches. The square east end has three fine First Pointed windows of two foliated lights each, with sexfoiled circlelets. At the time of my visit some few years ago restoration had not extended to the choir, which retained its eighteenth-century panneling, painted white. Above the arch opening to the nave was a copy in fresco of Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper," fast hastening to decay. Two windows on the south side of the sanctuary are lofty ones of three lights trefoiled, and curiously crossed twice by transoms, three foliated and plate-traceried circlelets filling the head. The whole church abounds in most delicate detail, and is worthy of careful study throughout.

A delightful walk was that from Bernières back to Caen, distant about ten miles, on a brilliant summer morning, heralded by a mist which obscured the upper portion of the spire, there being just enough breeze to ward off the heat. Passing through Langrune, I stopped to rest and examine its church, a First Pointed cruciform structure, low and long, and with a finely proportioned central steeple, which, however, has a rather forlorn appearance, since it has lost not only its squinches and broaches, but also its capstone and vane.¹ Langrune Church is rich in fine detail work, the clustering shafts supporting the arches of the tower and the groining of its apse being especially worthy of admiration. With the nave I was hardly so pleased. The arcade is a low one of eight bays, with short piers and Pointed arches. Above is a blind arcaded triforium and clerestory of single lancets. The effect of this is no doubt pretty, but conveys the impression that more has been attempted than is consistent with the limits of the elevation. Resuming the walk I soon reached La Chapelle, whose large modern church of Notre-Dame de la Délivrance, with its pair of spires, is visible at Bernières, and for a considerable distance beyond it. To admire this church externally was impossible, it being, like most modern Continental Gothic, lean and poor and quite unpoetical. It is cruciform in plan, and just east of each transept, German fashion, is a tower and spire, differing, however, in design. Beyond is a pentagonal apse with incipiently traceried lancets, and at the apex

¹ A general view of the exterior of this church at Langrune is given in Petit's *Architectural Studies in France*. It is one of those professedly rough copies of rough sketches with which the author partly illustrated his fascinating book. Intended to convey little more than the general character of the buildings, such drawings, though useless in point of detail, are marvellously faithful as regards outline and *ensemble*.



ST. JAEN, CAEN



BERNIÈRES

DIEPPE, CAEN, AND BAYEUX

of the roof a huge gilt angel. Internally this church is a really masterly conception, and, entering it as I did from the sunlit square, I was hardly able at first to distinguish its details owing to the profusion of stained-glass. Low arcades on either side of the nave admit to pentagonal chapels in lieu of aisles, and support a lofty clerestory of Early-traceried windows. The chancel is long, devoid of aisles, but richly arcaded beneath the windows. Against the northern pier of the arch opening into it stands an image of the Blessed Virgin and Holy Child, both attired in long blue robes, placed beneath a spiral canopied niche, reminding one of a German *Sakramentshauslein*.

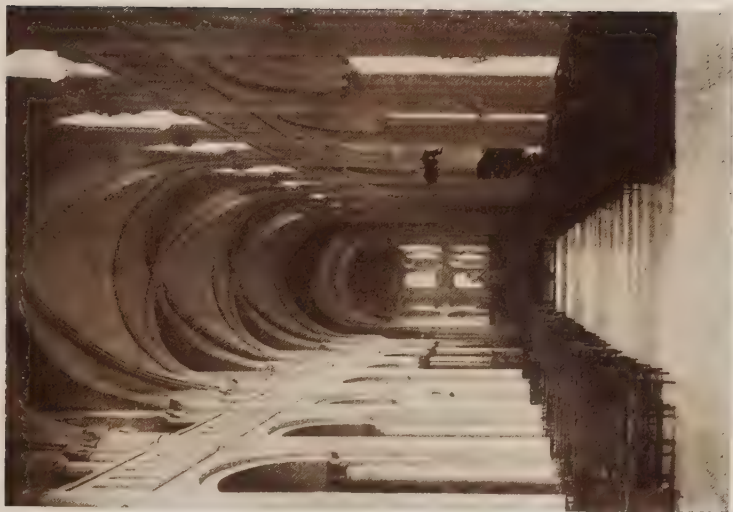
A *café au lait* having been quaffed in the pleasant *place* in front of this votive church of La Délivrance, I pressed on to Caen, arriving there about five o'clock, after a thoroughly enjoyable, because so diversified, walk, but without coming across anything very noteworthy from an ecclesiological point of view. Proceeding first to the modern church of Notre-Dame de la Gloriette—an Italian structure on the *motif* of St. Roch at Paris, but containing nothing very remarkable beyond the finely carved organ-case and baldacchino over the high altar—I soon quitted it for St. Michel de Vaucelles, to which there is a pleasant walk across some fields and along the banks of the Orne. This is a very interesting church, consisting of a low cavernous nave without clerestory or triforium, a Norman tower on the south, and a very lofty square-ended chancel. From the flight of steps leading to the Italian façade a fine panoramic view of Caen is obtained. This church is chiefly Late Decorated, and in the same style is the fine large cruciform St. Jean in the street of that name, with its two unfinished towers, the western one having those reed-like shafts to the belfry stage noticed before as so common in the Caen district, the central one Renaissance. No good general view of St. Jean can be obtained, shut in as it is on three sides by houses; but of St. Pierre, a structure whose noblest feature is its steeple, and which, from the large size and juxtaposition of its clerestory windows, ought to claim the title of "The Lantern of Normandy," views can be had from any point. The erection of St. Pierre seems to have occupied almost the entire duration of the Pointed styles, for the church consists principally of First and Middle Pointed work, while its apse and fringe of chapels show the unsparing labours of an architect of the Renaissance. Curious and interesting are these chapels from an historical standpoint, but they accord ill with the rest of the building; one looks in vain for a style like our Perpendicular to blend the two—the transition is too sudden. The elliptical arrangement of the apse clerestory, with its two windows in lieu of the three usually seen, may have furnished Street with the *motif* for his noble vaulted sanctuary at St. Saviour's, Eastbourne. A similar arrangement occurs in the church at Caudebec. Those

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who only know the interiors of the Renaissance chapels at St. Pierre from Roberts' and Prout's pictures can form no idea of their present appearance, equipped as they are with niched figures and altar-pieces, and glowing with a profusion of rich post-Gothic glass. The only defect of the interior of St. Pierre is that it is too light. This may be accounted for by the immense size of the clerestory and the absence of stained glass which may at some period have graced them. Hence I strolled up to the Abbaye aux Dames, or church of La Trinité—symbolised in the three figures holding a scroll within the tympanum of the restored western portal. Here again the Renaissance architect has shown his contempt for earlier and purer forms by substituting work of his own at the tops of the western towers. That the original work was removed is clear from the fact that the whole of the south-east angle turret of the south tower still remains, and one can plainly see where the arcade was cut away. Although smaller than the sister church of St. Etienne, the Abbaye aux Dames is richer Romanesque; remarkably elaborated are the westernmost bays of the nave between the towers. The nave alone is used for parochial purposes, its last three bays being screened off for the *chorus cantorum* and sanctuary, the parochial altar standing under the western arch of the lantern. Eastward of this the transept space is reserved for the inmates of the adjoining large hospital, for whose benefit an altar has been reared, backing against the parochial altar. Did the Abbaye aux Dames contain nothing else, the two exquisite First Pointed bays of the south transept would alone be worth coming to see; they resemble the nave arcades at Wells, but are somewhat loftier. In walking hence to the Abbaye aux Hommes I noticed two desecrated churches—St. Gilles, opposite La Trinité, and St. Etienne le Vieux—both fine specimens of Middle Pointed which may, it is to be sincerely hoped, at no distant date be restored to their sacred uses.

The great pile of St. Etienne, or the Abbaye aux Hommes, whose simple, solemn Romanesque façade may be regarded as the prototype of those of nearly all the great French Pointed churches, has, viewed from the east, a rather strong Teutonic character, and, with its spires, central steeple, and pinnacles flanking the apse, recalls certain Rhenish churches. Throughout, the work is bolder and ruder than in the church of La Trinité, ornament in the nave at least being conspicuous by its absence; but the choir in First Pointed is very graceful, and in the lancets of the clerestory there is some good modern glass. Very beautiful features are the small rose windows lighting the triforium passage in the choir, and peering through the unglazed openings in a very felicitous manner. Other noteworthy features are the clusters of vaulting shafts between the chapels in the choir aisles, which, with their First Pointed

LA TRINITE, CAIN



ST ETIENNE, CAIN



DIEPPE, CAEN, AND BAYEUX

stained windows, when viewed from the western extremity, brought Canterbury to my recollection very strongly; the plain but massive Henri IV stalls, and the grand open lantern above the tower arches.

Early next morning, which was Sunday, I was strolling in the little churchyard of St. Ouen, a picturesque Late Gothic edifice which, with its saddleback tower filling up the angle between the south aisle and transept, is apt to be overlooked by the ordinary run of visitors; the west door stood open, and the white-chasubled priest reciting Mass at the altar had a strikingly picturesque look.

Those interested in the ritual and musical aspects of foreign ecclesiology will be gratified by attendance at the ten o'clock High Mass at St. Etienne's, presenting, as it does, several features not noticeable in cathedrals and churches where the Roman rite has completely superseded the ancient Gallican one. For previous to 1860 almost every diocese in France had some peculiar Use of its own, extremely interesting, no doubt, to the student of ritual matters, but which from a practical point of view was very perplexing. Thus in 1856 we find a *mandement* put forth by the bishop of the united sees of Beauvais, Noyon, and Senlis, ordering the adoption of the Roman liturgy in place of the ordinary local Uses, of which he says there were no fewer than nine in his diocese, so that it often happened that the same priest, "chargé de deux paroisses, trouve dans l'église où il va célébrer une première messe, une liturgie différente de celle qui s'observe dans la paroisse où il réside; le chant, les cérémonies, les couleurs des vêtements, les usages, tout est changé." Such reforms were not, however, carried out without opposition, certain dioceses insisting on a large *Proprium Sanctorum*.

One Use retained by the diocese of Rouen was the procession round the entire church before the commencement of High Mass, and this, on the occasion of my visit to St. Etienne at Caen, was headed by the crucifer, vested in a cope, the nave and aisles being traversed to the chanting of some rather lugubrious Plain Song. I was once at Coutances when a similar procession took place, the cantors and officiants wearing green copes, a colour not often seen on Sunday in Roman Catholic churches, some saint's day or other, except under certain rules, being allowed to take precedence, when the vestments seen are either crimson or white. Another interesting feature of the service at St. Etienne this Sunday, which happened to be the octave of the feast of a saint locally celebrated, St. Exuperius, Bishop of Bayeux, was the singing of a Sequence or Prose in his honour. Commencing thus—

"Mittit in Neustriam
Per Exuperium
Legis notitiam
Redux ad Solium"

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it was taken to so very graceful and ear-catching a melody of the modern Gallican school as to render it an agreeable relief to the Plain Chant, which was, however, extremely well sung, accompanied by the organ in the choir, and responded to by the great one at the west end, to Dumont's noble Mass in D minor.

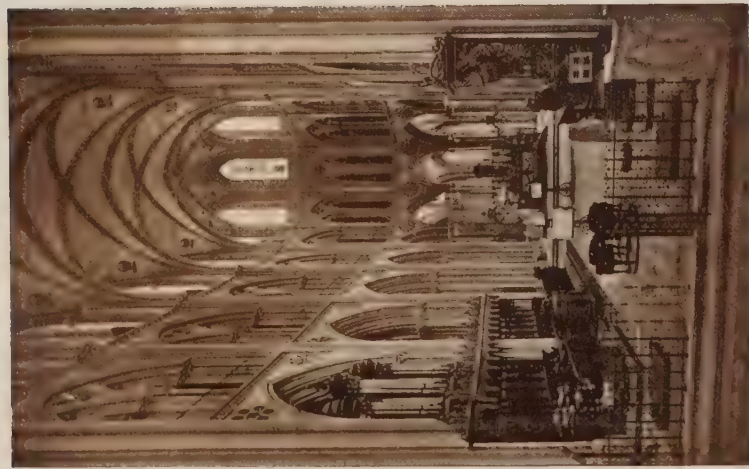
Yet another interesting Normandy Use came under my notice the preceding evening—the singing, at St. Pierre, of the *Miserere* in procession to a very melodious elongation of the Second Tone, thus bringing to an impressive conclusion one of those *Prières du Soir* which are so largely resorted to by the poorer classes all over France.

Having a mind to assist at Vespers at Bayeux Cathedral on the afternoon of this feast, train was taken thither in good time, the graceful steeples of Norrey, Bretteville, and Audrieu, and sundry “saddlebacks,” which it was not possible to identify, gladdening the eye at frequent intervals during the journey.

The Afternoon Offices at Bayeux comprised None, Vespers, Compline, and Benediction, but presented few features of interest from an ecclesiological point of view, the music being particularly jejune. However, they concluded early, thus permitting a lengthy survey of the building to be taken before proceeding to Coutances.

It is in its proportions, which are nearly assimilated to those of our own cathedrals, that the charm of Bayeux lies; nothing is distorted or overstrained, and there is a repose about it which is eminently satisfactory, though it is not possible to bestow commendation upon the bulb-like dome of its Flamboyant central steeple. Perhaps no church in Normandy abounds in such exquisite detail as Bayeux; indeed, it is a hard matter to decide what to admire most—the Norman nave arcade, with its wealth of diapering in the spandrels, its First Pointed clerestory and choir, or the magnificent Early Middle Pointed of its transepts. Indeed, the whole fabric is extremely magnificent. Built upon ground which slopes rapidly from west to east, it is cruciform in plan, with Romanesque and First Pointed western steeples and afore-mentioned bulb-like central dome surmounted by a *flèche*, erected half a century ago to replace a cupola and spire of Italian design. The western steeples are noble from their simplicity, having their surfaces carved in imitation of tiles, and had the central steeple been carried out in First Pointed, somewhat on the model of the graceful ones in its vicinity, Bayeux Cathedral might have been the possessor of one of the most perfect spire groups in France.

Chapels are grouped around the apse; the Decorated transepts project but two bays, and there is a fine south porch with double opening ranging with the chapels which the same epoch has added to the nave aisles on either side.



THE CHOIR, RAVEUX CATHEDRAL



RAVEUX CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH (L.A.S.)

DIEPPE, CAEN, AND BAYRUX

Standing under the central tower I first noticed the magnificent window in each transept. That in the south transept is modern, the original tracery having at a debased period of the art been removed, as may be seen by one or two windows in this part of the building, but which it is to be hoped will ere long be restored. The character of these two great transept windows differs—the north or original window¹ is of seven lights with a large wheel in the head, tracery of a more Geometrical character above each of the lights falling into the subarcuations. The south window has six lights, divided into triplets by a shaft bearing a niched figure, the large wheel above having a simple quarterfoil. In both these windows is modern glass, with brilliantly tinted effigies of saints well balanced by white quarries. From either transept most beautiful views across the cathedral can be had; indeed, the detail, especially of the choir, is so profuse that it is difficult at first to know upon what to concentrate the attention. Owing to the rapid slope of the ground there is a descent of several steps from the nave into the transepts, the crypt being confined to the centre of the church, and entered through a door in the first bay of the south choir aisle. The walls of the transepts below the windows are richly arcaded; in the north transept I noticed a statue of St. Peter vested in a flowing chasuble, from the chisel of Dupont. The arches opening into the choir aisles from the transepts have foliated circles in the spandrels, which impart great richness. The choir, entirely First Pointed, may be accepted as a typical work of that period, so graceful are the combinations of its slender shafts, multitudinous lancets and vaulting ribs. Fine grilles enclose the arches of the sanctuary; the choir stalls, canopied, and surmounted on the north by the "organ of accompaniment," are placed with the arcades, allowing the whole length of the pillars to be seen, as at Wells, and are of a chaste Renaissance character. Unfortunately the coupled columns in the apse have been fluted by an Italianising hand. The spandrels of the choir gironing are relieved by a series of heads of saints and bishops with their names in large letters, all carefully restored; while from the centre boss of the lantern radiate painted angelic figures. In walking round the choir aisles it was gratifying to observe the total absence of those glass chandeliers and imagery from the toy-shop with which the altars of French churches are too frequently disfigured, some having reredoses with predella in good mediæval taste. The first two bays on the south side of the south choir aisle are enclosed by a solid screen of fine First Pointed work, enriched with two tiers of arcading, the lower stage being pierced with a door admitting to the sacristy. In the nave the work of three periods meets; the arcade is richest

¹ Figured in Parker's *Introduction* as a typical window of the Early Middle Pointed French period.

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Norman ; the clerestory First Pointed ; and the aisle chapels Middle Pointed ; much of the tracery in the windows here is beautiful, some curious. One window in the north aisle, a low one of six lights in pairs, is traceried with a huge wheel of a very stiff and Geometrical character ; another window in this aisle is similarly traceried. Here is a good quantity of stained-glass, varying, however, in quality. Generally speaking it is creditable, and, inserted as some of it was before 1850, resembles that produced by O'Connor, Wailes, and Willement, when not under strict architectural supervision. A most picturesque feature in this cathedral is the flight of steps leading from the space formed at the west end between the towers down into the nave, of which arrangement an admirable idea may be gained from the delicate outline engraving in Pugin and Le Keux's " Architectural Antiquities of Normandy."

A prolonged saunter about the peaceful precincts, listening to the bells as, ever and anon, they chimed the first two strains of the beautiful old Latin melody, *Sanctorum meritis, inclyta gaudia* ; another turn round the exquisite choir aisles, looking doubly impressive in the fast gathering twilight struggling feebly through the storied lancets, and tenanted only by a few devotees before the altars in the radiating chapels, and it was time to seek the outer door, regretfully to close it upon such a combination of attractions. Turning my steps towards the prosaic regions of the railway, Coutances was reached long after " the crimson of the sunset sky " had left the old saddleback and other steeples that lined the route cold and grey once more.

CHAPTER II

COUTANCES AND SÉEZ

THE Cathedral of Coutances, nobly situated on a plateau at the summit of streets whose tortuous, hilly, roughly paved character recalls those of our own Durham, is, perhaps, one of the most graceful churches of the First Pointed age in France, the only additions in a later style being the chapels or oratories fringing the nave, separated from each other by fenestriform screens, and carried out in a very pure Geometrical Decorated style. Unfortunately the building is so confined that no good general view can be obtained. It consists of nave with western steeples, aisles, and flanking chapels; transepts, central lantern which under certain conditions of light bears a resemblance to the great rood tower at Lincoln, and apsidal choir with double aisles. Round this is a fringe of chapels, the Lady-chapel projecting considerably beyond the rest. Externally the lantern and western spires form a group which, even in the unfinished state of the former, is unrivalled in France for gracefulness.

Ruskin, in a singularly beautiful passage, praises the western spires of Coutances, but it must be confessed that a somewhat awkward appearance is imparted to them by the huge buttresses projecting from the north-west and south-west sides of their towers, which in their upper stage, like the central lantern, are octagonal, with a pinnacled turret joined by a small flying buttress to each semi-cardinal side. A low octagonal pyramidal capping surmounts the great central lantern, of which a fine view, including the transepts and choir, can be had from the episcopal gardens. From each tower projects a deep porch; the northern one is especially fine. In the tympanum of its inner door at the time of my visit were some headless figures which restoration, at that time in progress on this side of the nave, has, it is to be feared, swept away beyond recall, when one remembers how recklessly such works are too often conducted in France. Six windows filled with tracery of varying design of the best Early Decorated period, light the nave aisles, to which statues of kings and queens niched in the buttresses give additional richness, as do the traceried parapets, but on the south side of the nave a falling off in elaboration is apparent.

THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

Owing to the almost total absence of colour, especially in the nave, the impression of Coutances Cathedral on entering is cold, but the eye soon learns to dwell contentedly on the grand Doric simplicity of the First Pointed piers and arches. The organ loft, supported on four Corinthian columns coupled, is the first object that attracts attention on descending the several steps leading from the porches to the interior of the church. Unfortunately this piece of furniture conceals the fine inner west door of First Pointed work. The nave piers are all attached; above the arches runs a low arcade composed of five quatrefoiled circlets, forming the balustrade (to borrow a non-Gothic word) of a triforium gallery, the triforium is closed and takes the form of two arcades under a wide arch equal to the bay below; between the sub-arches is a richly moulded circlet, and within these subarcuations the wall is relieved by two narrow uncusped arcades. The lancet lights composing the clerestory are extremely simple, being without shafts or mouldings, but having in front a low trefoiled arcade on short pillars. Full of study is the moulded string-course, as, indeed, is all the detail here. Looking across the church, in whose vault we desiderate the ridge rib so dear to the English eye—indeed, it is rarely met with in France—most picturesque views are afforded by the side chapels, each separated from the other by a light, open-traceried screen—an unglazed window in fact. All these chapels are richly arcaded, each having below the traceried screen a constructional reredos of trefoiled arcades. The last chapel on the south has on its east, west, and south sides two tiers of figures under canopies; all are much mutilated, but a Crucifixion on the east side has been restored. Many of the reredoses retain traces of colour. The work on the interior of the central tower is most rich. Immediately above the great arches, where it becomes octagonal, occurs a low balustrade of trefoils; then a lofty double arcade, a pair of arches filling each of the eight sides; then an elaborately carved string-course; next, another low balustrade; after this a blind arcade, then lofty coupled lancets, and lastly the vaulting. In the choir, owing to the omission of the triforium, the arcade assumes very stilted proportions, the piers in the apse being circular, and placed back to back in couples, giving a very substantial, but at the same time *blancé* character to this part of the cathedral. The choir has two aisles on either side of it, separated from each other by a series of arches on short cylindrical piers with foliated capitals. Above this series of arches is a low triforium of unpierced arcades, surmounted by a clerestory of coupled lancets within a round-headed containing arch, a charming arrangement, and one occurring also at Bourges and Le Mans. The first chapel on the south has some polychromatic ornament, the walls and shafts being painted chocolate brown and vivid green, and on the western wall some restored mural painting



POURTOUR OF CHOIR, COUTANCES CATHEDRAL.

may be observed. In the second bay of this aisle a door leads out into the narrow lane on the south side of the cathedral, and the *ensemble* presented to the visitor who enters for the first time by this way is of great richness and solemnity, owing to the painted-glass with which the windows in this part of the cathedral are filled. All in the chapels is modern and generally good; in the great clerestory windows of the choir and apse, and in the transept triplets—the rose does not occur at Coutances—the original glazing remains, remarkable not only as being the earliest specimen of vitreous decoration in Normandy, but for the manner in which the shadows are produced by cross hatching with a brown pigment. Some of the tinctures are truly superb. The windows in the southern range of chapels round the choir are sometimes composed of two lancets and a trefoil, indicating a more advanced form of First Pointed. The second chapel—St. Martha's—has a good stained window not too archaic, as has the next chapel, St. John the Baptist's; here both the windows are tripled lancets, the centre light figured, the sides simple patterned. The fifth chapel has a rather too antiquated First Pointed stained window. All these chapels except the first are apsidal. The Lady-chapel, long and apsidally terminated, is most delicately polychromed, as becomes that dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, cream colour being the prevailing tint of the walls, and light blue of the glass. Nothing worthy of note occurs in the northern chapels of the choir; all have good modern First Pointed glass, of which I especially noted an exquisite diaper in the two-light window of the first chapel in this aisle from the west. The *chorus cantorum*, extending, as at Bayeux, across the lantern, is very spacious, but its fittings call for little notice. From the nave into the transepts is a descent of four steps, and one more from the transepts to the choir aisles, an arrangement contributing not a little towards picturesqueness of effect.

Besides the cathedral, Coutances possesses two large churches, inferior architecturally, but not wholly uninteresting. That of St. Nicholas is situated in a small *place* on the east side of the hilly street leading to the cathedral; it is cruciform, with a poor Renaissance central lantern copied, perhaps, from that of the mother church, and a low western pack-saddled belfry which does not reach the apex of the nave roof. The interior of this church, which, apparently, is a seventeenth-century building in imitation of a thirteenth-century one, is chiefly notable for its extreme length. The choir, a tolerable copy of First Pointed work, has a series of rather wide arches on circular columns of a rich, dark, granite-looking material, with foliated caps. In the apse are five narrow arches, a low delicate triforium gallery, like that in the cathedral, and a First Pointed and very simple clerestory. The lancets in the choir aisles are exaggerated things, like those produced in churches built at home during the

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Early Victorian era, but all filled with Renaissance glass. The choir itself, with its grilles and stalls, is most imposing owing to its great length. The nave piers are without caps, the arches dying off into them; a low arcade carried round into the transepts forming a species of triforium. The high renaissance western gate to the choir, and the pulpit on two Corinthian columns, with a sounding-board after the style of Wren's work, are picturesque *instrumenta*. Here may be noticed pews with doors—a feature once very common in Normandy, but which, from a picturesque point of view, it is to be regretted, is fast disappearing before the luxurious Parisian *prie-dieu*.

The other church of Coutances—St. Pierre—stands down the hill south of the cathedral, and is a good specimen of a late Flamboyant church, merging into Renaissance, cruciform in plan, with a western steeple and bulky octagonal lantern at the crossing. Seen from the railway this church forms with the cathedral an imposing architectural group. Internally it has a lofty arcade of round arches on piers without caps or bases, and an elaborate string-course below the triforium arcade. The most richly decorated part of the interior is the great central lantern—a really noble piece of Renaissance work, some of whose details have quite a Romanesque air. It is curious to note here, as at St. Nicholas, how much the cathedral must have influenced the architects of these two churches. Here again were the pews with doors, which, taken in conjunction with the plain round columns, suggested a Dutch interior. Some of the windows contain Flamboyant tracery; in others it has entirely disappeared, the broad lancet being divided into two acutely pointed and unfoliated lights, as at Oxford Cathedral before Scott restored the Perpendicular tracery. The choir, enclosed by high grilles and a western gate, the former erected on the wainscot, does not extend into the lantern, nor does a Lady-chapel project from the circumambient aisle. A great deal of Renaissance glass, chiefly modern, fills the choir windows, and the suspension of the organ gallery at the west end without any visible support is noteworthy.

Anxious to be at Chartres on a certain day, I returned to Caen, journeying through Lisieux, St. Pierre-sur-Dives, and Argentan to Séz, the most noticeable features of the village churches passed *en route* being their saddleback towers. This is a favourite form of steeple in nearly every northern district of France, especially in that part of Normandy lying between Cherbourg and Lisieux, but it rarely appears to be used on a large scale in town churches. Since the English Gothic revival the "saddleback" has been employed by architects in town churches with much success, as, for instance, by Mr. Butterfield in St. Matthias, Stoke Newington, and Mr. Champneys in St. Luke's, Kentish Town, where it is exhibited, as forming the chancel of those churches, with extremely



THE CATHEDRAL AND ST. PIERRE, COUTANCES



THE NAVE, COUTANCES CATHEDRAL



COUTANCES CATHEDRAL FROM THE
BISHOP'S GARDEN

grand effect. When funds are not forthcoming for a spire, such a termination will frequently be found both economical and effective, and at the same time out of the ordinary.

With the cathedral of the comparatively unknown Norman city of Sééz I was much charmed, though not a little chagrined to find the choir and its aisles in process of reconstruction, and for that purpose cut off from the rest of the building; for Sééz, while presenting many features of great beauty, was the worst constructed of all the French cathedrals. During the past century vast sums were expended upon this edifice, which, owing to its defective foundations, has had at different times to be taken down and rebuilt. Hence the far-reaching buttresses of the western steeples, which, taken in conjunction with the disproportionately large but finely detailed portal, impart such a peculiar air to this part of the building.

The nave of Sééz Cathedral, one of a number built during the early part of the thirteenth century, at a period when the secular clergy, rising into greater influence, were attempting to rival the religious, is distinctly Norman in its First Pointed character. It is only one of the many noble works which were in course of erection all over the north of Europe during this Augustan age of her ecclesiastical architecture, an age which, comprised between 1190 and 1250, saw the construction of some of the noblest Gothic buildings the world can show—Amiens, Auxerre, Bayeux, Beauvais, Beverley, Bourges, Châlons-sur-Marne, Chartres, Coutances, Notre-Dame at Dijon, Laon, Le Mans, Lincoln, Lisieux, Loches, Paris, Rheims, Rievaulx, Rouen, Salisbury, Semur, Soissons, Tours, Troyes, Wells, Westminster, Worcester, York; and the great German group so strangely behind the rest of European buildings, yet so worthy of admiration in many respects—Bamberg, Gelnhausen, Herford, Limburg on Lahn, Münster, Naumburg, Neuss, Paderborn, and the great Rhenish series. To what an age of religious and artistic activity do all these noble buildings, each characteristically beautiful, bear witness!

The transepts and choir of Sééz Cathedral, more Frankish in style, are Middle Pointed, and although deprived of much interest historically by reconstruction, these portions abound in exquisite detail—the rose window lighting each transept, and set within a square, being a noble specimen of its class. Much delicately foliated ornament is presented by the smaller doors in the basement of the steeples, and the central porch is a truly fine example of its school, though not, I think, very felicitously proportioned to the upper stages of the façade.

A dead wall filled up the eastern arches of the crossing and transept, materially impairing the general view of Sééz Cathedral internally, at the time of

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my visit, but there was much to admire in the portion westward. The nave piers are immense cylindrical ones with finely foliated caps, the vaulting shaft being continued right down each, not corbelled off, as in some thirteenth-century examples. Triple lancets light both aisles and clerestory, those to the former having a plate-traceried character, while the latter are filled with tracery. Séz being one of the very few French cathedrals in which the old basilican arrangement is retained, the high altar—in Revived Italian—stands under the crossing, surrounded by a good marble pavement. The two easternmost bays of the nave are screened off for the “chorus” by a marble balustrade. It was not possible, however, to bestow commendation upon the *parclozes*—elephantine masses of wood painted in imitation of white marble, but enriched in the centre of each compartment by a carved subject within a medallion, though they might in the present state of Revived French Gothic have been replaced by something worse.

Séz is a very quiet old place, more like an overgrown village than a cathedral city, solitude and repose being its most charming characteristics ; but, if a very rich modern Romanesque chapel attached to the Petit Séminaire be excepted, is devoid of architectural interest after the cathedral. A delay of several hours at Dreux, owing to the awkward timing of the trains to Chartres, enabled a visit to be paid to its fine chiefly Flamboyant church, and another object of considerable ecclesiological interest—the mortuary chapel of the Orleans family within the precincts of the château, a singular structure in the semblance of a Roman temple, erected by Louis-Philippe before his elevation to the throne of France in 1830.

It consists of a central round vaulted chamber of Classical architecture constituting the original building, which externally has been metamorphosed into a Gothic edifice. From this circular nucleus have sprouted four arms connected together, and with the original Classical shell, by a circular aisle which encompasses the latter. This aisle and its transeptal appendages are both internally and externally in the “Gothic of once upon a time,” or that familiarised to us by the illustrations in the romances of the last century. Anomalous though the work be as a whole, there is much internally that is of extreme beauty. The royal tombs exhibit exquisitely sculptured statuary ; the painted-glass from Sèvres is good, and the chapel, apart from its artistic character, must always command attention on account of the ill-starred historical associations with which it is invested.

At seven o'clock, after an hour's railway journey from Dreux, the gigantic cathedral of Chartres appeared on the horizon, seen for a long time before the station was reached, towering grandly above the city, which rises from out the golden cornfields of La Beauce.



THE WESTERN PORTAL, SÉEZ CATHEDRAL

CHAPTER III

A SUNDAY AT CHARTRES

WHAT can be more delightful than a Sunday in and about the cathedral of Chartres, which, justly taking its place as one of the most prized archaeological treasures of France, enjoys perhaps the most popular renown of any?

Who has not heard of its vast extent ; its crypt, awful in its solemnity ; its colossal proportions ; the beautiful statuary equipping its great portals ; its Scripture history in stone, sculptured upon the screens enclosing the choir ; above all, of its unrivalled collection of ancient painted-glass ? Few great churches of the Middle Ages can be selected as embodying so complete an expression of the architecture of the period, so perfect in its development, so evidently the majestic and magnificent product of one master mind.

"Chartres," most truly said Didron, "est un poème, dont chaque statue équivaut à un vers ou à un strophe, un poème dont la conception est plus vaste que celle de l'Enéide ou de l'Iliade, que celle même de la Divine Comédie, puisqu'elle comprend l'histoire religieuse de l'univers, depuis sa naissance jusqu'à sa mort, de la Genèse à l'Apocalypse."

With these thoughts I wake in this most enchanting of French cathedral cities on August 6th, the Festival of Our Lord's Transfiguration, a Holy Day spent more than once in and about some "dim and mighty minster of old time."

It is barely six o'clock ; however, the "jalousies" of the windows are thrown aside, and a lovely patch of blue sky greets me above the hotel courtyard, on whose red-tiled roofs some white pigeons are cooing and pluming themselves as if in celebration of the day. An omnibus waits below ; the horses are stamping on the paved courtyard, tossing their heads, jangling their bells, champing their bits, and sniffing the fragrant morning air. Presently the great *bourdon* from Jean Texier's exquisite steeple booms over the city for the six o'clock Mass, but except for these sounds the stillness of early morning is unbroken.

Wending my way across the sunny Place d'Epars towards the cathedral, I find that I am not the only person abroad at this early hour, soon falling in with quite a stream of old *citoyennes*, all looking so neat and fresh in the simple black dress, shawl, and closely fitting white cap. *Paroissiens* in hand—wrapped in some instances in a white pocket-handkerchief—the dames on reaching the

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"Close" pursue their different ways. Some, entering the great dim cathedral by the Porte Royale, or one of those grand transeptal porches where colossal figures of Apostles and Prophets, priests and kings keep guard, proceed to one of the Masses about to be celebrated in the chapels round the choir. Others descend a little flight of steps in the base of a tower flanking the north transept. I follow them, turn to the right, traverse a passage, open a glass door and find myself in perhaps the most solemn interior of Christendom—the crypt under the north aisle of Chartres Cathedral. To the right (westward) this crypt is comparatively light, having small windows in its north wall revealing frescoed historical subjects on the opposite one. Eastward a most impressive picture is presented by the long aisleless vault, depending for light upon the lamps suspended at intervals, or by the private candles placed by the devotees on their chairs, but culminating in a perfect blaze where, above the altar, encircled with numerous lamps and candles, and before which the white-chasubled priest is moving softly to and fro, sits enthroned one of the two figures of the Virgin so venerated at Chartres—that of Notre-Dame-sous-Terre. I do not linger long here, being anxious to regain the morning air. Daws are wheeling round and round those matchless spires which rise up into the cloudless blue heaven, chasing each other in and out of all sorts of nooks and crannies, while uttering their cheerful "Jack! Jack!"

The contrast presented by these two western spires of Chartres Cathedral—I may not inaptly term them the Alpha and Omega of spires—is most striking.

There is a Doric simplicity, a solemn grandeur of design, in the south-west or Vieux Clocher—"coloured on its stony scales by the deep russet, orange lichen's melancholy gold"—but it was robbed of its true proportions when the western façade was raised subsequent to the fire of 1194, thirty years after the completion of this steeple, the reconstruction of the church being undertaken on a much more grandiose scale.

The other spire, the work of Jean Texier, is, too, of its kind unsurpassed, and though the antipodes of the Vieux Clocher in every respect, groups well with it from all points of view, and thus we are in possession of two steeples each in itself a *chef d'œuvre*.

There is no central lantern at Chartres, a feature that becomes rarer the farther one travels from the English Channel; but steeples, which at present rise no higher than the spring of their gables, were designed to flank the transepts and apse.

The late William Burges, however, in a valuable paper on "Ornamental Woodwork," contributed to the number of the *Ecclesiologist* for December, 1856, informs us that this cathedral once possessed two *flèches*, one in the usual place at the intersection of the transepts, and the other between this



THE WEST FRONT, CHARTRES CATHEDRAL

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ast and the angel which surmounts the chevet. It was designed to contain a bell which was rung from the inside to warn the ringers in the great towers when to sound the bells. We are not told, however, whether these two interesting specimens of mediæval lead-work were in existence immediately prior to the great fire of 1836, when the whole timber-work of the roof was utterly destroyed, and all the bells and lead-work melted by the heat.

Fortunately, the admirable strength of the vaulting was such that it endured so severe a trial without injury, and it is pleasing to relate that the French Government voted nearly 50,000*l.* for the present roofing, which is of iron covered with copper sheeting.

After a saunter in the precincts of this Titanic pile, I enter it by the Porte Royale, which, apart from the grandeur and interest it derives from its sculptured effigies, is a charming bit of natural colour—a rich cinnamon brown melting as it ascends into a delicate pumice-stone-like grey.

So dark is the cathedral on entering it from the bright sunshine outside that only after the lapse of some moments is it possible to discern the details of the building, very dark in its western part, increasing in luminosity towards the great crossing, and with the choir and apse bathed in the glorious early morning sunshine.

The silence is unbroken, save every now and then by the tinkle of a bell in some remote chapel, or by the occasional footfall of a devotee on the way thither along the dusky nave aisles. The silver pipes of the great organ, by and by to pour forth its voice in the showy Interlude or Offertorium, gleam out from the sombre heights of the clerestory, where, as at Metz and Strasburg, it is disposed with such grand effect. The gigantic piers supporting the simply moulded arches which divide the nave from its aisles are on the very common French plan of four shafts surrounding a central drum. At Chartres these cores are alternately circular and octagonal, the circular ones having their attached shafts octagonal, and *vice versa*. All have foliated capitals, bold almost to coarseness, in plan and detail recalling those in the choir of Tours, and St. Hugh's choir at Lincoln.

The uniformity in the design of this great church is not the least interesting of its features. Begun in 1194, and completed in all essentials in 1260, one fails to discover any evidence of a change from the first scheme during the long progress of the work. Nothing seems to have been left for subsequent ages to carry out, the only accretions observable being the chapel of St. Piat opening out of the eastern ambulatory, and that of Vendôme, which forms an agreeable break in the line of the south nave aisle. The dates of these additions are respectively 1340 and 1415.

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Throughout the aisles, and in the clerestory of the great apse, the lancet window prevails, while in the clerestory of nave, choir, and transepts the fenestration is effected by coupled lancets surmounted by an immense plate tracced rose, formed of an octofoil, round which are sixteen small quatrefoils. The semicircular form of their containing arches causes these great clerestory windows at Chartres to impart a quasi-Romanesque air to the pile; and their roses, glowing as they do with magnificent old stained glass, have been not inaptly compared by an imaginative modern French writer to "saxifrages of flame opening in the pierced wall."

Each of the great lancets composing these windows is eight feet five inches in the clear; their only moulding is a chamfer, and the painted glass with which the whole series is filled is, in quantity and quality, unrivalled. Executed chiefly at the same time as the building, these windows form, together with those of the aisles, a most interesting study of the progress made in the art of glass painting during the first sixty years of the thirteenth century, single figures occupying the former, and small subjects treated medallion wise the latter, and their interest is enhanced a thousandfold when we recollect the glorious pageants their ruby stains have assisted to exalt, and the storms and revolutions which seem to have left these masterpieces of the vitreous art unscathed.

Seating myself in a chair with my back to the central western door, I have on either hand the "respond" of the narthex belonging to the immediate predecessor of the existing cathedral, of which the lower portions of the western towers are the only remains. When the present noble building was reared on the ashes of the one that perished in the fire of 1194, the western façade was brought flush with the towers, which in the old building projected beyond it, but with the porch or narthex between them. To left and right is graceful Transitional work, arches on piers with Corinthian capitals admitting into chapels formed in the bases of the towers. The baptismal chapel is on my left, the Chapelle du Calvaire opposite. Here is one of those enormous crucifixes so frequently seen in French churches, and erected, like many others, in commemoration of the mission held in 1826. Seen subsequently on Sunday night at sunset, this crucifix, rising to the roof, had a most solemn and awful effect. Passing up the shallow flight of steps which leads from the floor of the nave to the aisles, I pace them silently, glancing on the way at the Chapelle de Vendôme with its tall Flamboyant window, the only relief to the prevailing stemness of the cathedral, and crossing the vast transeptal space, gain the choir aisle; but as early Masses are proceeding at two or three altars here I am unwilling to disturb those attending them: so, postponing my visit to this portion of the building for the present, I retire to a secluded seat near the great



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southern transept door. Here is the *bénitier*, for at Chartres you are not confronted immediately upon entering, as in many Parisian churches, by an old person who holds a brush protruding with a dozen fingers made of bristle. Anything less suggestive of the beauty of holiness one cannot imagine. It is ugly, slovenly, greasy—in short, filthy. No, at Chartres the *bénitiers* are large and filled with pure, clean water, and while sitting near this particular one it is touching to notice the smallest children making ineffectual efforts to reach the stoup, till some elder comes along to the rescue and gives the little ones the water wherewith to cross themselves.

Quitting the building by the southern portal I descend into the Basse Ville, where cats are sunning themselves at the doors of their several domiciles, and where almost every *rez-de-chaussée* is the scene of much slopping and besoming by sturdy bourgeois in sabots, busied in making all taut and trim for the day. Here is St. Aignan, a quaint mixture of Gothic and Grecian, but how picturesque! A simple structure, like a huge ark outside, it has not even a spirelet to mark the separation between nave and choir. Entering by the enchanting little Renaissance door at the west end of the north aisle, one finds oneself in a fairy church of translucent colour, not so gorgeous, or deep, perhaps, as the Saint-Chapelle at Paris, or Notre-Dame de Bon Secours at Rouen, but exceedingly devotional. But how came Romanesque clerestory and triforium to surmount a somewhat fragile-looking Flamboyant arcade? anyone unacquainted with the history of St. Aignan will ask himself on seeing it for the first time. The fact is, this church is a clever imitation, but not the correct thing. Buildings of the same age as St. Aignan (1623) require a very practised eye to mark the distinction between original and copied work, so admirably did the seventeenth-century architects adapt the early mediæval styles. The fancy of the architect of St. Aignan for putting a triforium of small Byzantine Romanesque arcades and a simple clerestory of round-headed windows over his Flamboyant arches was, it must be supposed, an architectural conceit. And he has surmounted the whole by a wooden coved roof with tie-beams (of the same character as that employed by Burges in his Early French Gothic churches at Brisbane, Cork, and Stoke Newington), charming in its simplicity and its appropriateness.

Still descending, I gain a stone bridge crossing a little stream, and stay awhile admiring the picturesqueness of the whole scene—the great cathedral occupying the summit of the hill and the centre of the city, towering like a mighty giant over the dwellings of the people that seem to cling to it for protection, and, nearer in view, the apsidal east ends of St. Aignan and St. Pierre.

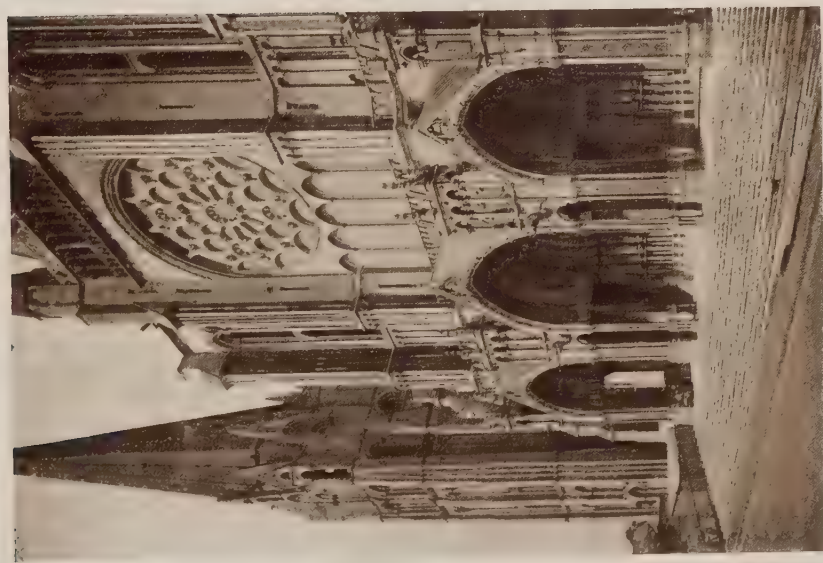
Towards the latter I now repair, glad to escape from a dusty and

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uninteresting boulevard into the old town again. St. Pierre, whose Lady Chapel enshrines some remarkable Limoges enamels, is a grand church, resembling in plan some of those built by the Preaching Orders in Belgium and Germany, and consisting of a lofty clerestoried nave and chancel under one line of roof, the separation between the two being marked by a slender *flèche*. There is an early tower at the west end, but it only rises to the height of the present nave clerestory. The oldest part of St. Pierre is the arcade and apse of the choir, in the very early First Pointed. More advanced than, but not unlike, that of the cathedral is the nave arcade, with its tall clerestory—broad lancets in couples, with a very small circlet within the discharging arch. Next in point of date is the Middle Pointed glazed triforium and clerestory of the choir, forming a perfect lantern of old glass little inferior to that in the cathedral.

Returning thither at the conclusion of a *petit premier déjeuner* in the courtyard of the Grand Monarque, "assisted at" by the canine and feline denizens thereof, I walk round the choir aisles with their matchless sixteenth-century screens—a New Testament history in stone—and presently arrive at the celebrated black image, "*la Vierge Noire du Pilier*"—hoisted into a wooden shrine of the feeblest Pointed character, decked out with trinkets and imagery from the toy-shop—before which clusters of candles are flaring and guttering the livelong day on round and triangular tin stands, whose equilibrium is disturbed by the slightest touch. On great days the galaxy of candles is considerably augmented, rendering the duties of the little acolytes in cleansing the trays of grease by no means a sinecure.

Notre-Dame at Chartres being at once parochial and cathedral, there are two sung Masses on Sundays and all great feasts—the parish Mass at nine, and the Chapter Mass, carried out with great pomp and circumstance, preceded and followed by the Offices, at half-past ten. On the occasion of my visit, the parochial one—a *Missa Cantata*, at which, however, incense is offered—presented but few features of interest to the ecclesiologist, ritual or musical. There is a tolerably large congregation, made up chiefly of women and children, as almost everywhere in France, a few men occupying stalls in the choir. The other parts of the cathedral most favoured at this Mass are the procession path commanding a view of the high altar, and the nave in the immediate vicinity of the pulpit, while at the extreme west end a pretty and pleasing sight is presented by an assemblage of the poorer classes of women, some of whom, owing to the obscurity of this part of the cathedral, have lighted candle ends stuck on to the ledges of their chairs, and in several instances I find three or four looking over one book. At the sermon all those hitherto seated in and around the choir adjourn to the nave; some, bringing their chairs with them, dispose themselves about



THE SOUTHERN PORTAL, CHARTRES CATHEDRAL



THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE BASSE-VILLE,
CHARTRES

A SUNDAY AT CHARTRES

the centre alley of the nave or as near the pulpit as they can get in the side aisles in a very picturesque and elastic manner. Opposite, in the *banc d'œuvre*, upon whose ledge two candles are burning on either side the crucifix, the celebrant and his assistants are comfortably "y-park'd." Not only are the preliminary notices almost inaudible, but also the subsequent discourse, which, however, has the merit of brevity; so giving up the attempt to listen, I muse upon the extremely picturesque scene presented by the nave on this occasion—one which Prout or Wild would have loved to paint had they lived now instead of when they did. Dwelling upon the glorious old thirteenth-century windows,

"Each the bright gift of some mechanic guild,
Who loved their city, and thought gold well spent
To make her beautiful with piety,"

but particularly upon the quintuplet of lancets below the great south transeptal rose, wherein on either side the effigy of the Blessed Virgin are those of the Major Prophets, each bearing upon his shoulder an Evangelist, in a very quaint fashion, I reflect upon the centuries of suns and storms that have successively glorified or expended their fury upon this marvellous wall of colour.

Throughout the Office the Plain Chant is uninterestingly monotonous, nor is it relieved by a melody that can be caught up and stored in the memory for long after. It is only on the great feasts that it is possible to hear a grand swinging air to such hymns as the *Plaudamus cum Superis* on the Assumption, or the *Jerusalem et Syon filiæ* on the Feast of Dedication.

"Madame, à quelle heure commencent les Offices Capitulaires?" I inquire of an old dame, who is putting chairs back in their places at the conclusion of the service. "A dix heures vingt, Monsieur," she politely rejoins. There is no time for an extended ramble about the city, so I sit quietly about under the trees in the precincts and listen to the great bells, or meditate before the triple northern portal which, with its "stones like concrete full of shells, and suggesting to the fancy a sea grotto left high and dry," is dight with "dedicated shapes of kings and saints," who seem to say—

"Ye come and go incessant; we remain
Safe in the hallowed quiet of the past;
Be reverent, ye who flit and are forgot,
Of faith so nobly realised as this."

In a lecture on the thirteenth-century architecture of France, delivered shortly before his death to the students of the Royal Academy, George Edmund Street descanted enthusiastically upon these great transeptal porches at Chartres, in which the architect "has shown such a mastery over delicate detail as has seldom been seen, and this with an originality of design and a fertility of invention which cannot be too much praised. Both porches are generally similar in

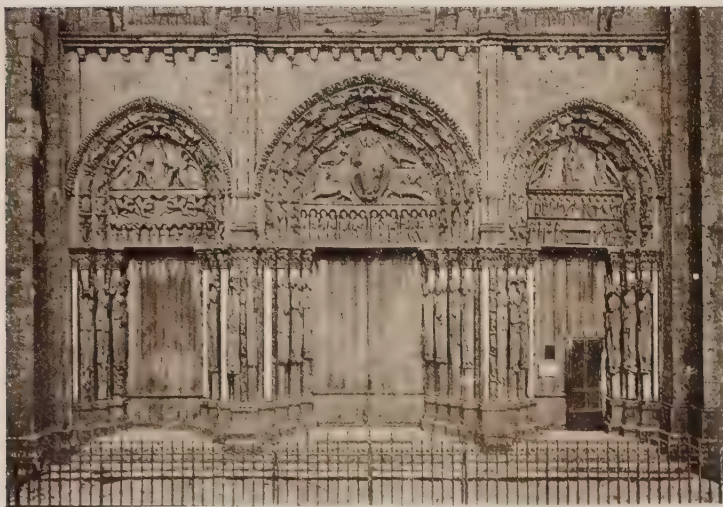
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outline, but extremely different in the detail of their planning, which, in the case of the northern one, is very varied and beautiful. . . . It is as if the architect had felt himself tied and bound in his scheme for the church, and found himself breathing freely again when he had to complete the porches." The three western doors, or Porte Royale, have seldom been excelled for the finished beauty of their workmanship. They are quite a hundred years older than the transeptal porches, and as specimens of richest Romanesque may be compared with the north and south doorways at Bourges, the south door of the nave at Le Mans, and one in St. Benigne at Dijon.

Already those who are to take part in it are dropping into their appointed places for the great Office of the day. First, the children of the choir, in scarlet cassocks, lace surplices confined at the waist by a pink sash, scarlet skull-caps and slippers, file slowly in with folded arms by the gate on the south side of the sanctuary. Forming in a double line before the high altar, they make a most profound obeisance—indeed, the genuflections all day at Chartres, from the most juvenile choir-boy to the most venerable canon, were simply perfection. Some short devotions concluded, at a given signal they rise, face the west, bow to such of the cathedral dignitaries as are present, and proceed in single file to their deskless stools on either side of the choir. Anon the cantors, in black cassocks and ugly sleeveless surplices, arrive and take up their position by the lecterns, on which rest the big noted books. Then a few more canons drop in, next a small procession of about a dozen seminarists; the organist takes his seat, strikes a keynote, and off they all start upon Terce, with the *Pater Noster*, *Ave Maria*, *Deus in adjutorium*, and the sublime Office hymn, *Nunc sancte nobis Spiritus*. The choir organ is silent during the long Psalms, but at the versicles following the Capitulum proper for the Transfiguration (*Salvatorem expectamus*, etc.), and while the six great candles are being lighted, it accompanies a boy whose limpid soprano voice rings through the vast building with an effect most thrilling because so unexpected. *Gloriosus apparuisti in conspectu Domini, Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!* sings the boy to the *Jam lucis*—that loveliest of Plain-Song melodies. *Gloriosus apparuisti* is then repeated by the whole choir, accompanied by both organs. Again the clear soprano is heard alone, singing *Propterea decorem induit te Dominus, Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!* *Gloria Patri* follows from the same boyish treble to another touching melody. The whole choir unite again in the *Gloriosus apparuisti*. Once more the solo breaks forth, *Gloria et honore coronasti eum, Alleluia!* to which the whole chorus answers *Et constituisti eum super opera manuum tuarum, Alleluia!* Amid this last grand burst of melody the officiant and his assistant ministers, in gorgeous vestments of white and gold, sweep in from the sacristy, the choir rulers, in copes, take their places at the lectern in



ST. PIERRE, CHARTRES



THE PORTE ROYALE, CHARTRES CATHEDRAL

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the centre of the choir, and the Chapter Mass begins with the *Asperges*, sung (*pace* M. Huysman) as I have rarely heard it sung before. On this occasion the congregation under the crossing, though by no means vast, is larger than at the parish Mass, and, perhaps, a thought more fashionable. Papa, mamma, and two boys enter by the south transept door. Mamma takes the boys' straw hats and finds a seat in front of the choir gate; the boys follow papa into the north choir aisle, as I thought, to pay devotions to the Black Virgin; but no, they reappear presently, aforesaid papa in cassock and surplice, and bearing a trombone, the two boys with him, and so they all go into the choir, evidently to the no small pride and gratification of the juveniles. A few men of the *ouvrier* class are lounging over the wooden partitions thrown across the transepts, and people whose dust-covered shoes proclaim that they have tramped in from the country are circulating in the choir aisles the whole time; but generally speaking they behave with reverence, and perhaps derive more scriptural knowledge from the glorious old glass and the matchless parcloles than from the elaborate music and ritual now going on in the choir. While the Kyries are being sung to one of the Plain-Song arrangements of Dumont, with loud and somewhat harsh interludes between each from the great organ pendant over head in the last bay of the nave, two small damsels, in dresses really so very *bouffied* that I tremble for the propriety of their appearance, enter the choir, preceding the bread about to be blessed, with tall lighted candles. However, all passes off with great decorum; and the bread, borne in on a species of litter by two red-cassocked and surpliced youths, having been placed upon a toilet-table-like credence, the damsels, doubtless proud as peacocks at the important part they have borne in the ceremonies of the day, retire to their respective seats. The officiants again advance to the altar, *Gloria in Excelsis* is sung, and then follows the Collect for the day, the Epistle being read from a lectern *in medio chori*. During the Gradual this piece of furniture is moved towards the entrance to the choir (facing north) for the singing of the Gospel, one of the most imposing features of the service, accompanied by the lights, and with the incense rising in a column before the old painted windows. The *Credo* follows, and then comes the Offertorium. Much happens at this point. Pockets are dived into for the sous requisite to satisfy the demands of the aforesaid old dame for the appropriation of a chair. On this occasion it is "Dix centimes, s'il vous plaît, monsieur; vous avez aussi un prie-dieu." Dix centimes! It is worth a franc at least. Anon come the canons on their eleemosynary round, when the addition of a small silver piece to the rich vein of copper already lining the interior of the alms-bag evokes a bland smile, a polite bow, and a "Merci bien, monsieur." The next excitement is the distribution of the *pain bénit*, handed round by a capped and gowned verger,

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followed by a rather sulky-looking chorister, forming a procession of two. We all take a small piece. Some, I observe, eat it at once, first crossing themselves with it; others place it on the chair-ledge in front of them to take home afterwards, but the baskets being exhausted ere they reach the barrier the unfortunates behind it get none, upon which the faces of some juveniles who have been looking anxiously for the bread fall several degrees. All this time a very grand Offertorium—Lemmens' *Marche Triomphale*—is played upon the great organ, during which there is leisure to glance round. Again the nave, looking westward, wears a most picturesque aspect. Several rows of chairs are occupied by *religieuses* in tall white caps. One aged sister particularly attracts attention by the way in which she follows the solemn music and ritual. Her face might be that of a Mater Dolorosa or St. Anna; it has a history in itself. Poor old thing! Perhaps her only comfort is this glorious building and its services.

Except at the commencement of the Canon, the congregation remain seated. Kneeling at the *Incarnatus* in the *Credo* is far from general, nor is there anything approaching that impressive congregational singing one hears in the German Catholic churches. Mass concluded, a grand rush takes place to the chapel of Notre-Dame du Pilier. Here is quite a long queue of women, many of them holding babies, awaiting their turn to kiss its pedestal. I remain to hear Sext, occupying a chair close to the low iron screen at the entrance to the choir. Somewhat surprised at the presence of a fashionably dressed lady and her little daughter—I say surprised because the chapter Offices are not attended by the laity—I soon discern the object of Madame in attending this Office, for at its conclusion and while the five-and-thirty choristers are making their obeisance to the high altar, I hear her say, while adjusting her pince-nez, "Can you see him, Angélique?" Angélique, a sharp little girl of about ten years of age, "spots" the mysterious "him" after a short inspection. "There he is, mamma," she says, in a sort of stage whisper; "let us go round to the *psalette*¹ and catch him." So off they go. I go off, too, and get some food, feeling a desire to fortify the inner man. Everybody goes off, and the vast church is left untenanted save by a few of the more ardent devotees in the circumambient choir aisle, and the priest whose turn it is to keep watch and ward over the miraculous image close to the north transept.

Repairing to the afternoon Offices I encounter numbers of young girls in white dresses and diaphanous veils hurrying from various directions, in some instances accompanied by a *bonne*, towards the cathedral. For this being the first Sunday of the month, a solemn procession of members of the Guild of the

¹ Song or choir school.



SOUTH CHOIR AISLE. MAKING'S CHURCH.

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Blessed Virgin is to take place immediately after Benediction. Arrived at the cathedral, where a magnificent Voluntary is being played upon the great organ, I find the south aisle of the choir occupied by these girls, who, under the surveillance of several nuns, fill it with a billowy expanse of lawn-like purity. One young damsel comes very late, and trips across the transept to the music of one of those airy and thoroughly French interludes at *Magnificat*. The congregation is not very large this afternoon, and some of the "enfants du chœur" have rather a post-prandial air about them; but the Offices, which embrace None, Vespers, Compline, and Benediction, are all carried out with the same dignified, but by no means mediæval, ritual that accompanied the Chapter Offices of the morning. The officiant and his assistants are all vested in copes, and the scene during the censuring of the altar, clergy, choir, and congregation at *Magnificat* is very impressive. Like most French choirs, that at Chartres is now only separated from the rest of the building by a low iron grille, so that all the various ceremonies are well seen from the nave. Shameful to relate, the Classic hand has been very heavily laid upon this part of the cathedral. For during the episcopate of Bishop Fleury (1746-80) its piers and arches were transmuted into a sort of Corinthian Renaissance of the Louis XV-XVI type under Le Sieur Louis, architect to the Duke of Orleans. Fortunately those portions facing the aisles have escaped this vandalism. Above the stalls on either side are solid walls built into the arcades, and backed in the choir aisles by the matchless sixteenth-century screens already alluded to. In the choir itself, these walls—enriched with large bas-reliefs, four on either side, ranging from the Conception of the Virgin to the Deposition of Nestorius at the Council of Ephesus in 431—are continued right round the apse behind the high altar, whose reredos, a mountainous mass of sculpture representing the Assumption, is neither better nor worse than the rest of the sanctuary fittings.

In making the circuit of the choir-aisles at Chartres an advancement in style is very perceptible. The foliated ornament in the caps of the clustered piers supporting the main arches, as well as that of the cylindrical ones belonging to the eastern fringe of chapels, is characterised by greater delicacy; besides, the fenestration indicates this. Here, instead of single lancets, we find them coupled beneath a round discharging arch, with just a *souppçon* of tracery in the shape of a diminutive circle. This very exceptional case of finding the later and richer work in the eastern portion of a French cathedral is explained by the fact that after the fire in 1194, in which the nave had suffered less than the choir, attention was directed first of all to the rebuilding of the western portions, partly because there was much remaining which could be made use of, and partly because those portions which it was possible to use at once could be put in

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repair, leaving such as needed entire rebuilding to be done after. If in the nave the work bears marks indicative of haste, it was the very pardonable fault of a city which could not endure to see its cathedral in ruins a day longer than was absolutely necessary.

The finest part of this afternoon's service at Chartres is the more than ordinarily congregational character of the music sung between Compline and Benediction to the accompaniment of both organs, the *Tantum ergo* at the latter Office being unusually fine.

The chapter Offices concluded and the clergy in their voluminous copes having withdrawn to the sacristy, I pass into the southern aisle of the choir to find the members of the Guild above alluded to in readiness to start in procession round the cathedral, some emulation among the more juvenile members thereof being observable in the matter of having a share in holding the silken strings of the banner which is to head the column.

One side of this piece of needlework bears a representation of the famed Black Virgin enclosed within a vesica, round which is inscribed "Nigra sum, sed formosa." Of the blackness there can be no doubt whatever, as to the latter qualification opinions differ.

The other side of the banner presents a pierced heart, also within a vesica, and inscribed "Saint Cœur de Notre-Dame de Chartres, priez pour nous."

At a given signal the damsels composing the procession strike up a plaintive metrical Litany, the melody and refrain of which haunt the ear long after, like most unaccompanied unison music. There must be between two and three hundred veiled girls in the procession, and as the mass of white, headed by the afore-mentioned banner and relieved now and again by the sombre robes of a Sister or the choir vestments of a canon, moves along, the scene is strikingly picturesque.

The train is closed by several scarlet-cassocked, red-slippered, and skull-capped youths acting as crucifer, taper-bearers, thurifer, and boat-bearer, the rear being brought up by a coped canon, who joins lustily in the singing.

A goodly number of the faithful and my own heretical self close in and swell both the throng and the strain. Down the south aisle we all go, descend the two or three steps into the nave, which we cross at its dimmest western portion, ascend into the northern aisle, proceed up it, and traverse the transept until the chapel of Notre-Dame du Pilier is reached. Here the girls, grouping themselves into two white masses, are addressed by one of the officiating clergy. Now the scene is exceedingly striking. Standing somewhat aloof from the little crowd, with my back to the parclose screen of the choir, to the right is the brilliantly illuminated shrine; a little in advance is one of the noble cylindrical columns

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with its stiff-leafed capital ; beyond lie the transept and the dusky northern aisle of the nave ; and to complete the picture, the western sun is streaming through the jewel-like glass in some lancet windows, occasionally flashing upon the tall silver crucifix as the uneasy chorister to whom it is entrusted now and again shifts his position.

The address concluded, a short Office of some kind is gone through in another chapel of the *pourtour* ; the Litany is resumed ; we again traverse the south aisles of both choir and nave, and then, turning up into the latter, complete the circuit of the building.

Regaining the place of rendezvous, the Salutation is given and responded to, and the diaphanous cloud disperses, some of its component parts in twos and threes, others in charge of a smartly capped *bonne*, and the remainder under the surveillance of the Lady Abbess and her subordinates.

With the plaintive Litany ringing in the ears, and the incense just pleasantly pervading the nostrils, I linger long in the dim aisles of Chartres, loth to quit them. Doubly beautiful do they appear under conditions of a glorious sunset, casting its last rays upon the tall crucifix in the south-western tower chapel, and flooding the pavement at the west end of the nave with gorgeous hues from that triplet of lancets of which, said M. Lassus : "leur éclat est tel, qu'elles font pâlir tous les vitraux dont le treizième siècle a enrichi cette admirable cathédrale." And thus draws to its close a most enjoyable and long to be remembered Sunday in Chartres.

CHAPTER IV

ROUEN

THE glowing sun throws a glorious flood of light upon a rich and lovely country as the tidal train speeds through it in the afternoon of a day late in July—that period of the year when, as George Eliot has so beautifully expressed it, “Nature seems to make a hot pause ; when all the loveliest flowers are gone ; when the sweet time of early growth and vague hopes is past ; when yet the time of harvest and ingathering is not yet come, and we tremble at the possible storms that may ruin the precious fruit in the moment of its ripeness.”

Wooded hills and deep-green pastures, ribbon-like streamlets, cosy home-steads, orchards and quaint village churches, enroll themselves in a charming panorama as the iron monster “with a shrill yell of exultation, roaring, rattling, tearing on, spurning everything with its dark breath, tears on resistless to the goal,” and only slackens speed when an ancient city with a fascinating galaxy of spires comes into view, seated on a broad sparkling river crossed by bridges, bordered by busy quais, and with small poplar-grown islet patches breaking its sinuous course. The tract of goodly land is Normandy—that most enchanting, and to Englishmen most interesting, of all the provinces of fair France ; the river is the Seine, and the spire-crowned city is Rouen.

For two reasons, however, I have selected Mantes as the starting-point on this occasion. Firstly, because I have been impressed with its beauty during several rapid transits from Paris to Dieppe or *vice versâ* ; and secondly, because I have an idea that the study of its Notre-Dame will form an appropriate introduction to a series of Early Pointed churches, representing French architecture as it flourished in the purest time of the art, and in the particular district where, as most people think, the Gothic development first took its rise.

Perhaps some of the north-eastern French churches are a little too early, conceived as they were towards the close of the twelfth century, before Gothic had fully developed its best and most characteristic features ; but no one can visit this remarkable assemblage of buildings without deriving from them new and enlarged views of the variety and exquisite beauty and extraordinary suggestiveness of the French Pointed style in its earliest and brightest days.



THE WEST FRONT, ROUEN CATHEDRAL

It was the Lille Cathedral competition, and the publication of such valuable additions to architectural literature as Viollet-le-Duc's "Dictionnaire raisonné," T. H. King's "Study Book," and Robert Johnson's "Specimens of Early French Architecture," that, now nearly half a century ago, led to an almost exclusive study of foreign work which became too visible in many of our buildings of the next twenty years or so, which had its turn, and which shared the fate of all other fashions in architecture.

A counterfeit style cannot express a nation's character, and if work is to be in any sense national it must first be real, and, however it may be developed to meet the requirements of the day, the ancient architecture of our own country must, at least, form its natural and legitimate basis. In making these remarks I am not abating my admiration for such consecrated thoughts of artists as St. Mary, Stoke Newington; St. James the Less, Westminster; St. Peter's, Vauxhall; and that fine group of north-east London churches; still, at the same time, it is impossible not to express pleasure at the return of their several accomplished authors to our quiet, homely and peaceful English style; for French work, even in its most perfect periods, has a certain tinge of parade and pride that is out of key with true English character, and we perceive in it an adumbration of that all-pervading *system* which even at this day is so distasteful to the Englishman in France.

In visiting these glorious churches of Normandy, the Ile de France, and Champagne, it is hard to avoid remarking the extent to which the early thirteenth-century builders of Germany were in many ways indebted to them, while, of course preserving certain national characteristics. The architects of Naumburg and Bamberg drew their inspiration for the steeples of those cathedrals from Laon. Amiens gave an architect to Cologne, and St. Ivéd at Braisne that compromising plan to St. Victor at Xanten and St. Mary at Treves. The nave arcades of the Marien Kirche at Lübeck are strikingly reminiscent of those in the choirs of St. Omer and Tournai. The classically pure statues that guard the Golden Portals of Bamberg and Freiberg in the Saxon Erzgebirge recall those of Rheims as their prototypes. The "hall" churches of Paderborn, Osnabrück, Herford, Minden, and Marburg, with their domelike vaults and graceful detail in the capitals of their imposing pillar masses, are possible importations from Anjou and other western provinces. And if St. George at Limburg, St. Quirinus at Neuss, St. Mary at Coblenz, the church at Boppard, and the choir of Magdeburg, with their grandly-developed Männerchöre, were derived from Laon, Noyon, and Senlis, all one can say is they had at least a glorious parentage.

As the tidal trains do not stop at Mantes, it is necessary to change at Rouen.

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This, however, I do not regret, as it gives me an opportunity of renewing acquaintance with its cathedral—an old and highly-valued friend. Rouen has too frequently furnished the theme of description to the antiquary and the tourist to allow of my saying anything very novel on the subject of it; still, a few remarks on some of the leading characteristics of its cathedral, which time permits me to visit on this occasion, may not be wholly devoid of interest.

Diversity of style and irregularity of outline perhaps destroy the value of Rouen Cathedral as an architectural composition and prevent its competing on these terms with Amiens, Bourges, Chartres, and Rheims, yet no one of the great northern French churches possesses so many and varied points of extreme value and beauty, or teaches us so much not to be learnt at home. Indeed, each time Rouen Cathedral is visited, the student can discern fresh beauties, representing as it does a fusion between the Gothic of the thirteenth-century as practised in Normandy and that of the *Domaine Royale* legible in Paris, Senlis, Laon, and Soissons.

Perhaps there is no part of France in which this most glorious epoch of ecclesiastical architecture can be seen in such perfection, or conceived in so graceful yet vigorous a spirit as in the nave of Rouen, the choirs of Bayeux and the *Abbaye aux Hommes* at Caen, and the steeple of *Bernières*.

Next to its irregularity, the great charm of Rouen Cathedral resides chiefly in its comparatively modest dimensions, which enable its three diversely-outlined steeples to assert themselves and to constitute most delightful and picturesque groups from whatever point they are viewed; while the manner in which the two noble western ones are carried beyond the line of the nave aisles, more completely than at Wells, is a wonderful auxiliary to the dignity and majesty of the façade—unique even in France.

The lower part of the north-western tower, the chapels flanking the apse and those opening from the transepts are vestiges of the late twelfth-century church. But of this edifice the most priceless remains are the side doorways of the western façade.

Perhaps there is nothing more beautiful nor more thoroughly Gothic in the whole realm of Christian art than these doorways. They cannot be said to vie with, because they are in some particulars unlike, those in the west front of Genoa Cathedral. Yet in other respects they are so puzzlingly similar as to afford room for endless conjecture, and there is probably no point on which documentary evidence would be more interesting than any bearing on their construction would be. The detail of the sculptured foliage is very similar, being in both rather Italian than French in character; whilst the rich effect obtained at Genoa by inlaying black marble with white, and white marble with



THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF NOTRE-DAME, ROUEN
(From the drawing by Colman)

black patterns, finds its counterpart at Rouen in an ingenious sinking of the face of the stone with deeply cut indentations, which, at a little distance, produce by their deep shadows almost the same effect as in the Italian example.

Excepting the Lady Chapel, this church of Henry Plantagenet—the immediate predecessor of the present one—covered the same area as now. In 1200¹ it was destroyed by fire, together with a vast number of churches and a considerable extent of the city.

Du Moulin in his "*Histoire de Normandie*," p. 501, records that in 1200 "Jean sans terre . . . repassa en Normandie . . . et fut bien triste de voir que l'église de Nostre Dame et la meilleure partie de la ville de Rouen auoit este brulée."

The re-edification of the cathedral seems, however, to have been prosecuted with great vigour, for ere the century had completed its third decade its essential parts were ready for occupation. In 1280 the façades of the transepts with their matchless rose windows were commenced, and to about this period one would assign the graceful series of gabled windows lighting the chapels which fringe the nave. The original Lady Chapel was removed in 1302 and replaced by the present unusually elongated one, and during this and the succeeding century great alterations took place in the fenestration of the upper parts of the church to meet the ever-growing passion for stained glass. Other fifteenth century additions are the gable of the north transept front and the north and south portals, portions of the noble central tower, the upper storey of the north-west or St. Romain's Tower, which is mainly coeval with the nave, and the graceful stone staircase in the north transept. In 1485 the foundations of the south-west, or Butter Tower, were laid, and the work completed in 1507, while the incrustation of the western façade with Flamboyant work, during which the side doorways already alluded to providentially escaped, dates from between 1509 and 1530.

That extraordinary wooden spire of Early Renaissance character with which the Cardinal Archbishop d'Amboise II endowed the central tower, was also an addition of the early part of the sixteenth century. It figures in Turner's "*Picturesque Tour of the Seine*," but the best idea of it may be gained from the accompanying illustration of the drawing by Cotman in Dawson Turner's "*Normandy*." In 1822 this spire was struck by lightning and burnt, but was succeeded by the present ponderous structure of open cast-iron work from the designs of one M. Alavoine, who died in 1834, having been, it is stated, at work

¹ M.C.C. Eodem anno IV idus Aprilis, in nocte paschæ, combusta est tota ecclesia Rotomagensis cum omnibus campanis, libris et ornamentis ecclesiæ, et maxima pars civitatis et multe ecclesiæ.—Chron. Rotomage, apud Labbeum.

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upon it ever since 1823. In the interim, a view of the cathedral showing the south transept with its graceful flanking First Pointed towers, which rise above the aisles, and richly sculptured Portail de la Calende, was taken by Charles Wild for his series of French cathedrals. Of this drawing, in which the central tower, bereft of its spire, has a truly noble appearance, I am able to present a copy.

It is impossible in this place to do more than glance at the several portions of so bewilderingly interesting a cathedral as Rouen. In its varying phases of Early Gothic we may read the habits and motives, and almost discern the thoughts of its promoters at certain periods; and even in the successive alterations and additions one cannot fail to observe the different types of beauty which have formed the prevailing standard of various eras. Particularly instructive is the variety observable in the internal elevations of choir, transepts and nave. In the first, the earliest and least refined portion of the work, which, with chapels only occupying its alternate bays, may be said to take up ground intermediate between Sens and Auxerre with their solitary chapels, and the other great northern French churches with groups around their apsidal ends, —we find boldly moulded arches carried on those very tall cylindrical columns with elongated capitals of conventional foliage which reproduced themselves through all the ages of Pointed on the Continent, but which were seldom if ever employed by English builders after the Transitional epoch. These lofty bays in the choir at Rouen are carried round the apse in a grand sweep, and support a low triforium stage of simple lancets and a clerestory whose original fenestration, such as may still be seen in the transepts, has been altered to work of a more advanced character. In the transepts the arcades opening into the aisles are commensurate in height with those in the choir, but have slender shafts attached to the piers supporting the groining ribs, and are therefore invested with a character of much greater elegance. The upper stages range with, and are similar to, those of the choir; but here we may study the original fenestration of the clerestory, which is composed of coupled lancets, rather wide, and in some of which tracery of a Flamboyant character has been inserted. In the nave, that fourfold division in height with which we are familiar at Soissons, Noyon and Laon occurs, with this difference, that the second stage, instead of opening into a spacious tribune or triforium as in the examples just quoted, is visible from the aisles. Such an arrangement constitutes one of the most striking features in the nave of the Collegiate Church at Eu, between Dieppe and Tréport; but there the effect is rather one of fragility, owing to the employment of tripled attached shafts to carry the pier arches, whereas at Rouen the columns are compounded of a number of clustered shafts which, with their delicately foliated capitals, recall those of Wells in all but height.



THE SOUTH TRANSEPT, ROUEN CATHEDRAL.
(After Charles Wild)

ROUEN

In giving his nave this quasi-triforium one would be led to imagine that the Norman-Gothic architect adopted it either from a feeling of dissatisfaction with the somewhat attenuated piers of the choir, or from a dread of that monotony which an unbroken series of eleven such bays would be likely to produce, or from a desire to make the vaulting of his aisles range with that of the choir and transepts.

In any case we must regard this arrangement as one of those instances common in mediæval architecture of seizing upon a difficulty as the best opportunity of achieving a success.

The vaulting of these aisles of the nave at Rouen is not only extremely beautiful, but instructive and valuable in the highest degree. The groining ribs spring from small shafts which rest on the string-course above the pier arches, these shafts corresponding to those of the *soi-disant* triforium which, I should have observed, are not sub-arcuated as at Paris, Laon, and Noyon, but correspond in everything except height to the bays below. But perhaps the most striking feature in the nave aisles at Rouen is the group of five slender shafts detached some distance from each other, resting upon the abacus of each pier, and serving to relieve the bare spandrel of the arch in a manner which, viewed from the western extremity of either aisle, is most fascinating. The arrangement of these groups of shafts recalls those graceful tourelles at the angles of the towers at Laon and their copies at Bamberg and Naumburg.

In the first seven bays of the nave the third storey, a series of low arcades, is Early Pointed like those in the transeptal and eastern limbs, but in the remaining four a flamboyantising hand has been at work. Throughout the clerestory the original lancet arrangement has disappeared and given place to windows of four lights with tracery of a transitional character, between geometrical and curvilinear.

The interior of Rouen Cathedral, like that of almost every French church of the first class, suffers from want of a high open or close screen. To say nothing of the religious side of the question, the interest of a great Gothic church is ruined if it can all be taken in at a glance. The interest which poet and painter excite by leaving much to the imagination, by suggestion and allusion, is obtained in architecture by partial screening, and leaving ever a suggestion of something on beyond, which we search for, because there is a pleasant mystery about it. Thus we are charmed by an art which delights us by its variety and masters us by its power and apparently unfailling originality.

What would our long-drawn English cathedral interiors be like without their choir screens, whether open or close?

Until 1777 Rouen Cathedral possessed a choir screen which, as l'Abbé

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Bourassé so aptly expressed it, "rappelait par ses ciselures nombreuses et ses milles dentelles légères le voile qui, dans le temple judaïque, cachait le Saint des saints aux regards profanes." At divers times in France there have been four classes of ambonoclasts—the Calvinist, the Pagan, the Revolutionary, and the Modern. The Calvinist, if he did not destroy the screen utterly, "brake down all the carved work thereof with axes and hammers." The eighteenth-century Pagan, who belonged to a school which could rifle windows of priceless stained-glass on the plea of greater "cheerfulness" and could substitute altar-pieces in scagliola, "sparkling lustres, paper pots, wax dolls, flounces and furbelows, glass cases, ribands and lace," for the choicest treasures of Pointed art, removed the mediæval screen altogether, replacing it by a high close one in "a politer taste." Sometimes it took the form of a low wall with iron grilles and gates, such as exists to-day at Auxerre, Tours, and St. Etienne at Caen; and formerly at Troyes and other places, as may be seen from the plates in Chapuy's works, or in the nineteen exhaustive folio volumes on the "Antiquities of France" by Taylor and Nodier.

The Revolutionary confined his attention to the destruction of what the first two had spared, and the Modern restorer of the Second Empire and the Third Republic, in order to gratify that rage for a vista which was then rampant, made a clean sweep of all screens, Gothic or Classic, and it is to be feared that in too many instances he carried the day.

With regard to Rouen Cathedral we have to feel indignant, though in different ways, with the second and fourth class of screen destroyers.

To quote again from Bourassé:—"La ruine de l'ancien jubé à Rouen a été froidement consommé, sous l'influence de préjugés inexcusables, par les mains habiles qui introduisirent dans nos églises du moyen âge les molles créations du ciseau grec et romain, époques d'insouciance barbare dans les mœurs et de raffinement dans le goût."

At Rouen this "molle création du ciseau grec" took the form of a jubé supported on tall columns of the Ionic order.

Incongruous as it was, this Classic rood-loft in Rouen Cathedral was not devoid of dignity, and in default of a better served to illustrate the principle which I have advocated above; but about twenty years ago its fate was decreed; the ambonoclast of the fourth class came on the scene, removed it, and replaced it by nothing.

It may not be generally known that the word jubé is derived from the formula, "Jube domine benedicere," prefacing the singing of the Gospel, which until the great Revolution took place in the rood-loft. The following extracts from the "Voyage Liturgique" of Du Moléon, published at the end of the



THE NAVE BEFORE RESTORATION, ROUEN CATHEDRAL.

seventeenth century, give some idea of the elaborate ceremonial that accompanied this custom in certain of the French churches :¹—

Cathédrale de St Jean à Lyon.—"Le diacre demande la bénédiction au célébrant, et ils vont au jubé en cet ordre :—Le porte-masse, les deux portechandeliers, le sous-diacre d'office tenant un coussin devant sa poitrine, un des diacres assistans tenant l'encensoir, puis le diacre tenant les livres des évangiles, que personne lorsqu'il passe ne salue ; *ils montent au jubé* ; là, le sous-diacre regarde le diacre en face ; puis, après ces mots, 'Sequentia sancti evangelii secundum,' le diacre se tourne avec tout le chœur vers l'autel et fait, comme le célébrant, un triple signe de croix. On n'encense point le livre ni avant ni après, *mais seulement le grand crucifix du jubé* est encensé de trois coups avant l'évangile et trois coups après."

St. Maurice d'Angers.—"Le grand diacre ayant commencé l'ante-évangélium, l'orgue le continue, et cependant on va au jubé en cet ordre :—En allant, deux thuriféraires parfument d'encens le chemin de chaque côté, suivis de deux portechandeliers ; puis un petit diacre portant le texte des épîtres, et le grand diacre celui des évangiles, vont tous trois par le côté de l'épître et *montent au jubé, &c.*"

St. Etienne d'Auxerre.—"Le diacre va au jubé lire l'évangile, étant précédé d'un enfant de chœur qui porte un voile environ de deux pieds et demi pour couvrir le pupitre, sur lequel l'évangile doit être chanté, des deux portechandeliers et du porte-croix ; puis marchent le thuriféraire, le sous-diacre, et le diacre portant le livre des évangiles fort haut : *ils montent en cet ordre au jubé, &c.*"

It was not at Rouen alone, but throughout France, that the Pagan and Modern screen destroyers have each in their way wrought such mischief, and it is worthy of remark that in such German cathedrals remaining in Catholic hands at the close of the Thirty Years' War as Treves, Münster, Paderborn, Osnabrück Bamberg, and Freiburg, the same havoc was countenanced by the clergy of that most vitiated epoch of the Church in Germany, the middle of the eighteenth century.² On the other hand, in those religious edifices that had passed into Lutheran keeping—the cathedrals of Halberstadt, Lübeck, Magdeburg, Meissen, and Naumburg, and the collegiate churches of Gelnhausen, Kolberg, Riddags-hausen and others—not only have their magnificent rood-screens been preserved,

¹ In most French cathedrals and large churches nowadays the Gospel at High Mass is sung at the entrance to the choir from a portable lectern. This is doubtless a relic of the old custom of singing it in the jubé.

² The churches of Xanten near Cleves, and of Wetzlar in Hesse, are among the few honourable exceptions. At Münster in Westphalia, the beautiful roodloft in the cathedral, known now only by S. Read's drawing, was removed about twenty years ago, with the object, no doubt a praiseworthy one, of enabling the congregation in the nave to join in the Chapter Offices.

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but the Mediæval arrangements generally of their choirs, civic pride in these monuments having been stronger than the iconoclastic mood. Even in those provinces where the Reformed doctrines were received more eagerly than elsewhere—Mecklenburg, Pomerania, Saxony, and certain districts of Westphalia—not only have the better class of German Protestants preserved what is ancient, but at periods, subsequent to the breach with Rome, have added many new decorations, particularly paintings of scriptural subjects, often in large numbers. Of course, many of these partake of the general declension in art common to the epoch, yet at the same time they show that no fanatical dread of such embellishments was prevalent among their promoters.

But time flies while I am thus musing, and if I am to sleep in Mantes to-night it is fully time to resume the journey thither. With a regretful sigh, therefore, I seek the outer door of this most picturesque yet majestic of the glories of France, to close it upon such a multitude of attractions.

CHAPTER V

MANTES AND THE NEIGHBOURING CHURCHES

WHILE daylight lasts the journey from Rouen to Mantes is pleasant enough. As the train sweeps round the city, one of the most fascinating architectural groups in Northern Europe unfolds itself. Proudly dominating all is the cathedral with its triple steeples of varied outline; a little to the north-west I perceive the English-looking pinnacled tower of St. Vincent, and in its neighbourhood the now, alas! isolated steeple of St. Laurent, which seems to have been inspired, like the Butter Tower of the cathedral, by the glorious lantern of St. Ouen. St. Maclou's graceful modern spire and the more humbly dimensioned ones of sundry other churches complete the group, all these silvery-grey masses, with their western sides now steeped in the crimson glow of a fine sunset, forming with the river and the background of purple hills one of the most magnificent combinations of the works of art and nature it has ever been my fortune to witness. In travelling about Normandy it is interesting to observe the general use of the central tower, particularly in those districts neighbouring to the coast, and its almost total disappearance the further one penetrates into Frankia. Was the use of this important feature as seen on the noble scale of Rouen, Coutances, Bayeux, Lisieux, Fécamp, Caen, Dives, Ouistreham, and Norrey, due to English influence, or because the comparatively modest dimensions of all those buildings permitted of its employment.

Presently the remains of Bon Port Abbey come into view, and as the train is going at a very leisurely pace, I have time to dwell upon the northern front of its refectory where four lancets surmounted by three openings—two quatrefoiled and one cinquefoiled—are enclosed by a shallow round-headed arch. Next, the ark-like church of Pont de l'Arche is passed, proudly dominating the town which seems to nestle beneath it for protection. By this time darkness has begun to gather, and the long slow journey in the feebly-lighted third-class railway carriage begins to get tiresome. For the first hour or so my travelling companions—soldiers chiefly—are very lively and talkative, but during the remainder of the ride very silent and somnolent, one dozing off in the attitude of Benjamin Allen when he accompanied Mr. Pickwick on his mission of peace to

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Birmingham, leaving nothing of him visible but his spine and his coat collar. However, as a once popular novelist very truly observed, all things must have an ending, from a quartette at a classical concert downwards, and so does the journey in the dark this Saturday evening from Rouen to Mantes. Outside the station one of those boxes on wheels, facetiously styled in country places an omnibus, is in waiting ; so, availing myself of the services of this vehicle, I am welcomed—after a few minutes of bumping, jolting, and snake-like twistings about narrow streets where lights in upper windows betoken that their inmates are seeking repose—at my hostel with a politeness truly Gallic by madame and several domestics of the establishment, the reception taking place at the door of its very *sanctum sanctorum*, the kitchen, which looks very comfortable and appetising with the firelight dancing on the stewpans, bain-marie pans, and other mysterious instrumenta of the cook's art.

Of "Mantes la jolie" I see nothing until the following morning, when it looks true to its name as I lean over the parapet of the bridge spanning the Seine, which leaps and sparkles in the sunlight, or wander in the acacia-shaded precincts of Notre-Dame until a solemn bell sends its voice over a delightful tract of country, summoning the faithful to the chief office of the day. Entering the short, lofty Early Gothic church and taking a chair just within the great central doorway I watch the congregation arrive. As mama and the girls dip their fingers *bien gantés* into the stoup and pass the holy water on to a friend, there are nods and pleasant courtesies ; for is it not prescribed in the hornbook which contains the legend of Tommy and Harry that it is a necessity of etiquette to bow to one's friends on entering church ? Men are conspicuous by their absence—there are plenty of them enjoying the *dolce far niente* on the rush-grown banks of the Seine or in boats on its silvery bosom—indeed, excepting those engaged in the choir or about the altar, scarcely half a dozen are to be seen in church. Several large schools enter with a prodigious clatter, and are stowed away in aisles and remote chapels of the edifice. Some juveniles arrive late, and in the hurry to reach their places, apprehensive of bad marks or something worse, get entangled with a little procession which is just traversing the nave for the Asperges, to the no small detriment of M. le Curé's cope, upon which, as it trails, they set their hobnailed half-boots. Viewed ecclesiologically, the service at Mantes this morning is uninteresting, for neither ritually nor musically does it rise above the commonplace. The Plainsong consists mainly of dreary ululations, quite unrelieved by one of those enchanting Gallican melodies corresponding, I suppose, to the stately chorales of Germany, into which, at various stages of the office, the whole congregation bursts, and which greatly tend, there is no doubt, to popularise church-going among the people of



MANTES.—NOTRE-DAME FROM THE NORTH



NAVE LOOKING EAST, MANTES

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that country. At the *Kyrie* the bread to be distributed at the Offertorium is borne in, looking like a miniature Tower of Babel, preceded by a boy and girl, each carrying a gaily decorated candle. Duly blessed, it is removed to a side chapel and made ready for distribution. While inspecting the church prior to the commencement of service, I had noted the arrival of this bread from the bakery under the convoy of Jules, in irreproachable white cap and *blouse de dimanche*.

The officiant at Mass is a pleasant-looking old gentleman, and during the sermon—an excellent one on the Gospel for the day, which I regret there were so few to hear—sits picturesquely at the entrance to the choir with a little server in diaphanous cotta, scarlet cassock, sash, slippers, and zucchetto on either side of him. In the interval between the services I make a thorough architectural examination of Notre-Dame, and the result of my researches here, as well as of those among the neighbouring villages of Mézières, Epone, Limay, and Cassiecourt—smallest of abbatial churches—I now proceed to detail.

The church of Our Lady at Mantes—built from the designs of Eudes de Montreuil for Queen Blanche of Castille and her son St. Louis, afterwards Louis IX—is only one of a vast number that was being scattered over the face of northern France during the latter half of the twelfth century, when, as Victor Hugo so appositely expresses it:—"The Pointed arch arriving from the Crusades came and seated itself upon the broad Roman capitals which had been designed to support only circular arches." In all these stupendous creations, one is at a loss to know what to admire most—the extraordinary engineering skill manifest in their construction, the skill evinced in the disposition of their ground plans, the beauty and vigour of their sculpture, or that combined boldness and delicacy which so forcibly bespeaks the character of the men who conceived a galaxy of works from the study of which certain of our most distinguished practitioners have derived many a useful notion, without of course vitiating the strict form of our own beautiful and lovable Pointed.

Notre-Dame, at Mantes, may be roughly described as the choir of the cathedral at Paris with a pair of towers at the west end, and as the slight alterations made at Mantes have not concealed the original design, it affords valuable information as to the first arrangement of Paris. From my knowledge of both churches, I venture to suggest that Eudes de Montreuil was also the unknown author of that great crowning work of the French Transition.

Reference to the illustrations will show that the dimensions of the church at Mantes are but moderate, great height and inconsiderable length being its most striking characteristics; but any appearance of awkwardness arising from such an union is greatly minimised by the apse, thus proving to us how useful this

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feature is in such cases. From the western door to the extremity of the eastern chapel it measures but 223 feet, the length to the commencement of the apse being distributed over three great vaulting bays subdivided into six lesser ones, and there is in addition one bay covered externally by the towers. A singular feature, for a church built in this part of France that is to say, is the absence of transepts; but Eudes de Montreuil most probably found that their introduction was incompatible with the ground at his disposal and the height to which he had designed carrying his building. And here I may remark, parenthetically, with regard to the absence of transepts, that in travelling about the Continent one is frequently struck with the resemblance of the minor churches in some feature or another to the mother church of the diocese.

Thus the transeptless cathedral of Bourges seems to have influenced the architects of St. Pierre-le-Guillard and Notre-Dame in that city, and may probably have decided M. Viollet-le-Duc to omit the cross arm when he was called upon to complete the rich Flamboyant fragment of a chapel in the castle of the Bourbons, which was converted into a cathedral when Louis XVI bestowed a mitre upon Moulins-sur-Allier. Again the noble churches of Clamecy and Varzy may have had their prototypes in the cathedral at Nevers. Similarly, in the church of St. Eusebius at Auxerre we find a clumsy imitation of that *chef d'œuvre*, the graceful triplet of arches on slender shafts that unite the square-ended Lady chapel with the chevet of the glorious choir of St. Etienne; the apse of the church at Norrey is that of Bayeux Cathedral in miniature; the uniquely beautiful lantern of the cathedral at Coutances is reproduced in the Early Renaissance St. Pierre, while the glorious Early Champenois apses of St. Remi at Rheims and Notre-Dame at Châlons-sur-Marne reproduce themselves at Montiérender.

The most striking feature of the interior of Notre-Dame at Mantes is the vaulted "tribune" immediately over the aisles. This is carried round the church except at the west end, and to a certain extent has its counterpart in the rudely raftered triforia of our three great East Anglian Norman cathedrals of Ely, Norwich, and Peterborough, in the later "Mannerchore" of the Rhine churches, and the choir of Magdeburg. It is, however, worthy of note that this vaulted second story was only adopted by the Germans in those churches having but a limited floorspace, as Boppard, St. Maternus at Cologne, Limburg, and Neuss. Perhaps this was why it was used at Mantes.

Although remarkably graceful examples of the exaggerated triforium occur in the later First Pointed choirs at St. Etienne at Caen and the cathedral of Bayeux, this feature appears only in the earlier epochs of that period, and as its use seems confined chiefly to the north-eastern districts of France, one is led to

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suppose that it was a purely local one, among the most notable examples being St. Germer, near Beauvais, Laon, Noyon, Senlis, Notre-Dame at Paris, Notre-Dame at Châlons-sur-Marne, St. Remi at Rheims, Soissons, Montiérender, Mouzon, and Tournai.

Generally these tribunes open to the nave by large discharging arches, commensurate in width—in some instances in height—with the bays below, and divided sometimes into two, at others into three, arcades springing from slender columns. The tympanum is either left plain, as at Mantes, or pierced with a small ox-eye, as at Paris, the discharging arch being “*en plein cintre*,” as at Noyon, but more often than not pointed; the arcades are invariably pointed.

In the tribune which occurs in the graceful twelfth-century apsidal south transept of Soissons Cathedral the arcades are disposed in pairs or triplets without any containing arch, and are uniform in height.

Besides this tribune there is in several of the examples that I have named a lesser triforium, consisting merely of a row of small arcades embedded in the wall, or with just a narrow space intervening. It is interesting to observe what a very subordinate feature the triforium becomes with the development of Pointed Gothic at the commencement of the thirteenth century.¹ Take, for instance, the cathedral of Soissons, where the two systems may be studied in the face of each other. In that graceful semicircular south transept which dates from 1175, when the reconstruction of the church was begun under Bishop Nevillon de Cerisy, we find this spacious vaulted tribune on a scale at once beautiful and majestic. But when the work of rebuilding the nave and choir was taken in hand the whole character of the elevation was changed, the arcades opening into the aisles being greatly increased in height and bulk, and the triforium being sunk to a mere blind arcade. On the other hand, the clerestory was made a feature of much greater importance than heretofore, for the better display of painted glass, which was then becoming so necessary an auxiliary to architecture. Indeed, to such a height had this passion for fenestral embellishment grown before the century had more than half run its course, that the wall behind the triforial arcades was glazed too, thus producing an appearance of great splendour, though, as some may judge, at the expense of stability.²

¹ Of course I do not include in these remarks such magnificently spacious triforia as Amiens and Rheims, or those met with in St. Omer, Ypres, and Bruges, and the Burgundian churches of St. Etienne, Auxerre, Notre-Dame at Dijon, and Semur, where, although but little space intervenes between them and the wall, the dimensions of the arcades are by no means insignificant.

² The following buildings exhibit this arrangement, which in some instances causes the triforium to look a mere continuation of the clerestory:—The cathedrals of Amiens, Beauvais, Metz, Nevers, Strasburg, Tours, and Troyes; and the churches of St. Pierre at Chartres, St. Ouen at Rouen, and St. Jacques at Dieppe.

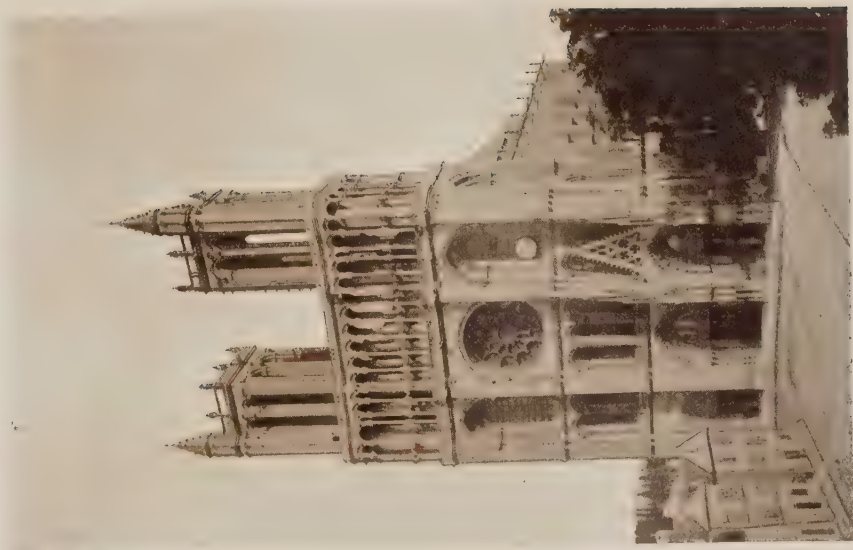
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In some of the great thirteenth-century examples, as *e.g.*, Coutances and Le Mans, where the arcades are of unusual height, the triforium disappears altogether, being transferred to the elevation separating the double aisles with which the choirs of those cathedrals are provided. At Bourges, where the same aisle arrangement occurs, one cannot help thinking that the omission of the triforium, had it been possible, would have been an improvement, and greater dignity given to the clerestory.

The groining of the eastern part of the triforium at Mantes with a succession of transverse barrel-vaults springing from a lintel surmounting the capitals of a series of detached shafts is very remarkable. At first the whole of the triforium was vaulted in this picturesque manner, but not long after the completion of the church the barrel-vault was changed for one of quadripartite character, and wherever this has been done the thrust has been too great for the principal groining shafts, which have bulged considerably and are now held in place by iron ties. At the same time, or very soon after, the original fenestration of these tribunes was entirely altered, Geometrical Decorated windows of several lights being substituted for those large simple circles which still illuminate the galleries in the apse. Set as they are in oblique splays, these seven great circles all present themselves to the eye at once from the entrance of the choir.

A noble feature in the extreme western bay occupied by the towers is the arch, which runs up without break to the vaulting, the whole height of the triforium and clerestory. Had the aisle space been a few feet wider this arch might have risen direct from the floor of the church, and have thus formed a species of gigantic narthex, such as we see at Noyon, or in our own glorious Peterborough. In the clerestory the system of lighting has, except in one bay, remained undisturbed, but the church suffers from a superabundance of light poured in through the great plain lancet windows. Rified as they have been of their stained glass, a feeling of disappointment is caused in the minds of those fresh from the unearthly solemnity of Auxerre, Bourges, and Troyes.

At Mantes the apse is formed of seven narrow sides, three of which are cardinal and the remainder oblique. The piers are monolith cylinders, with boldly foliated capitals and square abaci, the same type being observed throughout the church, where the columns stand isolated. Seven chapels radiate from the procession path, additions of the complete Gothic epoch in its earliest and best phase. To the same period belongs the large chapel on the south side of the choir, which has a picturesque approach of several steps from the aisle. As usual, while the great apse is left undecorated, all these chapels glow with modern wall painting and stained-glass. The mural and vitreous decoration of



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the Lady chapel, executed as it was during the late forties of the last century, is very creditable ; but some of the best modern stained-glass I have ever seen in France is in a chapel to the immediate left, comprising single effigies whose brilliant tinctures are set forth by a background of grisaille. Each chapel is a three-sided apse, the windows being in two divisions, with Geometrical tracery, and recall on the whole Mr. Street's graceful apses in St. Mary Magdalene, Paddington, and St. John the Divine, Kennington. There is no distinction between the nave and the choir at Mantes except in arrangement, which is, however, very poor, the fittings being apparently made out of some of the old pews with which the nave was doubtless fitted before the tide of restoration set in. The church, which is vaulted throughout with simple quadripartite vaulting with roll ribs, has great unity of design, and grows upon the student at every successive visit. The frequent recurrence of the mystical numbers, three and seven, is well worthy of attention.

It is unfortunate that the south-western portal of the façade at Mantes should have been tampered with by an architect of the Later Gothic period, otherwise, despite the modesty of its dimensions and the unsparing manner with which it has been dealt by the modern restorer, it may be accepted as a typical one of its age and class. There is a noble Doric simplicity about the central triplet of lancets and the circular window over them, whose tracery, almost identical with that in the same position at Laon, is an adumbration of those glorious roses for which the Gothic of France was to become unrivalled. At different times both the western towers of Mantes—connected by an open screen as at Paris—have been taken down and rebuilt, but their present appearance always strikes me as particularly lean and poor. Until their reconstruction these towers, to judge from an engraving of about sixty years ago, must have been far more satisfactory in general outline. One reason for their unpleasing appearance I take to be the removal of large sloping slabs of stone—apparent in the engraving to which I have alluded—going from the larger parts of the towers at about an angle of seventy degrees, and connecting them with the upper and smaller stages. These slabs—analogueous perhaps to the broaches of a spire or to those used on the oblique sides of an octagon growing out of a tower—were undoubtedly original, being marked with scales in the early French manner, and put up almost immediately after the towers were built, because their sky-line was found unsatisfactory. From such investigations as I was able to make, the original intention must have been, as at Laon, to continue the shafts and arcadings which surround the lower stage of either tower up to the top.

In some details these western towers at Mantes recall those of Notre-Dame, but they are quite deficient in that dignity and repose which certain little touches

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in them confer on the *ensemble* of the Parisian cathedral, view it from what point you will.

I did not wait for vespers in the afternoon at Mantes, hoping to be able to attend them at Gassicour, lying about a mile from the city in a westerly direction, and it was during the return walk thither that the meagre towers of Notre-Dame struck me with such unpleasant force.

Gassicour is a cruciform church of the smallest dimensions for a building that once aspired to abbatial dignity, comprising a Romanesque nave, with a fine western doorway, transepts, and square-ended chancel all in Early complete Gothic. The whole is dominated by a charming central Romanesque tower, with one of those saddle-back terminations common to the district, and a triplet of round-headed windows in each face, which have a German rather than a Norman Romanesque character.

The dimensions of Gassicour are by no means large, yet the architect of the thirteenth-century portions contrived to invest the mass with an appearance of great dignity. The form and elevation of the gables could hardly be improved, and the tracery of the windows, which is of great beauty, relieves the general severity. The window at the east end of the chancel is of four divisions, the unfoliated lights being grouped in pairs beneath a subarcuation with a trefoil, while the head of the window has a large sexfoiled circle.

The side windows of the chancel are of two lights, that on the eastern side of either transept of three, and with tracery composed of three quatrefoils; all the lights being uncusped denote the Early Geometrical character of the work.

The three chancel windows retain their original glazing, of great value and interest. That in the altar window, of late thirteenth-century date, was repaired about half a century ago. It contains twenty-five small groups representing the whole Passion of Our Lord, but two of the subjects—the thirteenth and eighteenth—were wrongly placed when the work was restored. The side windows are earlier, and contain large figures under canopies. The east window of the south transept has groups from the lives of two saints—one of them St. Laurence.

Nor are the arrangements of this little quondam abbatial church of Gassicour less remarkable, the fifteenth-century stalls with subsellæ and returns being placed—if memory serves aright—in the two eastern bays of the nave, leaving three bays to the west, while in the eastern wall of the north transept is the old altar.

Interesting, too, is the mural colouration at Gassicour, seeing that in France, as in England, such things are very rare, though it is true that from its late date (fifteenth century) it is of but little artistic merit.

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These paintings exist in the south transept, whose walls and roof are covered with them. The western wall has the Doom, and the eastern one large figures on either side of the graceful three-light window, while on the soffit of the arch opening into the space beneath the tower are angels playing on musical instruments. How these interesting vitreous and mural decorations in this little village church have contrived to elude the iconoclast and obliterator, when from the mother church of Mantes they have disappeared entirely, is indeed a marvel. To my disappointment the afternoon service had concluded before I could reach Gassicour; however, in high good-humour with this important addition to my stock of ecclesiological knowledge I returned to Mantes, and after a brief rest and some refreshment, started off in another direction for the villages of Mézières and Epone, lying along the high road which for some distance borders the Seine. Thus the evening passed very agreeably.

The church at Mézières is mainly Renaissance, but the rebuilders of that epoch have retained the mediæval northern arcade of the nave, a very good Early Pointed one, carrying one roof over the whole, but leaving the space between the top of the arcade and the roof unfilled. The effect is somewhat odd. The chancel, poor Renaissance, has a five-light east window recalling our Perpendicular, but very coarse and plain round columns and arches, supporting an unfenestrated triforium stage and a somewhat ambitious-looking vaulted roof. At the time of my visit—a few years ago—the nave was fitted with pews, which have doubtless ere this been “improved” away. St. Remi and St. Jacques at Dieppe retained them until a comparatively recent period, and I have come across them in other parts of France, more particularly in villages, so that their use is not so exclusively English as many suppose. At St. Etienne, Beauvais, I observed, in running my eye down the “tariffe des chaises,” that “un banc, derrière le maître autel,” let at rather a high figure. In the neighbourhood of Troyes benches with straight, open backs seem still in vogue, and several churches in the city itself were equipped with them when I visited it in 1892. Outside, the most picturesque feature of the church at Mézières is the little First Pointed saddle-back steeple standing at the east end of the north aisle, with two tiers of shafted lancets furnished with bargeboards.

Epone almost joins Mézières. Here, again, the most interesting external feature is the steeple, consisting of a Late Romanesque square tower growing into an octagonal one surmounted by a short stone spire. The chancel and north chancel aisle are good First Pointed and vaulted. The aisleless but very wide nave has been rebuilt in modern Romanesque, but a nobly moulded Romanesque doorway, now blocked, has escaped the general destruction. Externally the chancel looks very imposing, owing to the gradual descent of the

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ground on which the church stands from west to east. While sitting in the calm evening outside a modest "auberge" opposite to the church, in conversation with the proprietor, the bell in the steeple—a relic of the curfew, I presume—began to toll,

Swinging slow with sullen roar.

The effect of this, taken in conjunction with a fine sunset, was uncommonly impressive.

In addition to the churches whose leading features I have briefly sketched, there are others in the neighbourhood of Mantes, which to those with a superabundance of leisure afford a fruitful field for ecclesiological research.

Limay, a suburb of Mantes, on the north bank of the Seine, has a graceful tower and spire of Late Romanesque character, but the church is quite uninteresting. The spire is richly scalloped, and has lights with fine pinnacles at its base. Some attached shafts against the face of the belfry stage, whose purpose I was unable to divine, may have formed the *motif* for the similarly placed one in the steeples of Notre-Dame. In both these churches I have observed the use of a remarkably effective form of label, the section of which is a square cut out into diamonds like unpierced dog-teeth. A good example of this occurs in the priory church at Lanercost.

Folainville is the possessor of a very beautiful saddleback tower, with unusually high-pitched gables. It stands on the north side of the chancel. The style is Transitional, the pillarets to the belfry stage being Romanesque with cushion capitals, the arches Pointed.

At St. Martin we find a low, square central tower charmingly canted off into an octagon by receding broaches like those of the spire of All Saints, Margaret Street. The octagon supports a short spire.

Vaux has a graceful semi-circular Early Pointed apse attached to a gabled Romanesque tower and transepts. Romilly is worth a visit for the curious construction of its tower arches. They are very plain, and rise from brackets which are quatrefoil in section and project very considerably from simple responds. The steeple rises between the nave and the chancel, but there are no transepts. It is low, octagonal and Romanesque, with one of those spires that form such charming features in the landscape of our Kent and Sussex wealds.

The western and eastern sides of the tower are quite absorbed in the roofs of the nave and chancel, whose apices rise above its eaves line, but the whole constitutes a pretty village group.

The imposing church of Triel, between Mantes and Poissy, is, like the Decorated of Ripon Cathedral choir, retrospective in character. I refer more

MANTES AND THE NEIGHBOURING CHURCHES

particularly to the elevation of the nave, which, at first sight quite early thirteenth-century, belongs in reality to the fourteenth.

The outline of the church at Poissy—a mingling of Romanesque and Transitional with extensive Flamboyant additions—is picturesque and imposing with its two steeples. One stands at the west end and the other at the crossing, an arrangement recalling Wymondham in Norfolk.

This feeling of pleasure, however, soon becomes one of disappointment, for the whole exterior has been scraped into smugness and smartness more tragic than utter ruin. The desolation wrought in the apse is truly terrible. Here is a procession path with chapels, and in the clerestory large circular windows with incipient tracery, copied, perhaps, from those in the triforium of Notre-Dame, Paris. The transepts have been absorbed by Late Gothic additions to the nave among which must be noticed one of those elaborate porches of which the Norman Flamboyant architects have given us noble specimens at Louviers, Montivilliers, and St. Maclou, Rouen.

CHAPTER VI

NOTRE-DAME, PARIS

THE sun rises as usual on the third morning of my visit to Mantes, and within two hours of that luminary's appearance I am in the train and speeding towards Cleopatra's "delightfullest of cities, Paris."

My old friends, the octagonal spirelet of Epone, the saddle-back of Mézières and Poissy's imposing pair of steeples, appear and in due course disappear. Then a continuous series of Seine-side villages with churches of distractingly tempting appearance enchains the attention, and as the clocks are striking the half-hour after seven the train glides into the station at St. Lazare.

Delightful is the drive through the streets lying between that terminus and the Gare de l'Est, where I arrange to leave my belongings after instituting inquiries relative to the departure of an afternoon train to Meaux. Here is Monsieur on the way to his bureau; there Angelique is tripping bonnetless, neat basket over arm, to market; now we skim past the fountains sparkling in the morning sunshine before the façade of the Trinité, and anon I catch a glimpse of the twin towers of St. Vincent de Paul, enshrining Flandrin's noble procession of saints, which I make a mental resolve to get a peep at before the day is out. The vehicle dismissed, and matters adjusted at the station, I repair to an adjacent café where enjoyment of the "first little breakfast" of rolls and coffee is enhanced by the charm and novelty of the environments. Thus invigorated I stroll down the Boulevard de Strasbourg to the Hôtel de Ville and so on to Notre-Dame, whose apse with its array of flying buttresses looks this morning more than ever like some huge angel with folded wings keeping watch and ward over Paris. At this early hour the interior is free from sightseers, and as I pace the double aisles wrapt in admiration of their spaciousness and the symmetry of their varied colonnades, the bells boom along the roof in announcement of morning service, for which preparation is being made by two little choristers, who in scarlet cassocks and girdled albs, which now and again catch a bit of colour from the stained-glass, are flitting about the dusky choir. Jean du Goulon's sumptuous Louis Quatorze stalls¹—may they, like Gibbons' match-

¹ Minutely described in "L'Album des Boiseries sculptées du Chœur de Notre-Dame de Paris."

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less ones at the west end of the choir at Canterbury Cathedral, ever remain—are hung with black draperies edged with silver, and a great shaft of light descends from an open window in the southern clerestory on to Coustou's "Pietà" behind the altar, the group being thrown into relief, at first quite startling, by an immense black dossal bearing a white cross and concealing the central arch of the chevet. Evidently a requiem is to be sung at Notre-Dame this morning.

During the whole of Terce and Canons' Mass I am the only occupant of the great sea of chairs filling nave and crossing, but towards the close of the latter I am joined by a few stragglers and a party in mourning attire, interested, I presume, in the succeeding Requiem. The organ is silent during the Breviary Office, but at its conclusion a magnificent, though all too short, voluntary peals from the instrument, touched this morning by the masterly hand of M. Serre, the *maître du chœur* himself, a most polite person, as I presently discover. This beautiful piece serves only as a prelude to the Introit, as the celebrant and his assistant ministers leave the sacristy and approach the altar. In more subdued tones it accompanies the plain chant at the different stages of the Mass, which is celebrated this morning with almost dominical splendour, but at the Offertorium it bursts forth in all its power in an extempore piece, thoroughly French, but in which the devotional element is never lost sight of, rolling through the pillared aisles and "awakening the slumbering echoes in the caverns of memory." No less imposing, both ritually and musically, is the Requiem—for a deceased dignitary of the cathedral I afterwards learn—which succeeds the Chapter or Canons' Mass after an interval of only a few minutes. At this I also assist, much enjoying the solemn cadences of the "Dies Iræ," one of the four great Sequences¹ that escaped the general devastation when the literati of the court of Pope Urban VIII undertook the "reformation" of the Roman Office Books, and which, like the remaining three, has formed the theme of musicians from the sixteenth century onwards.

At Notre-Dame this morning Thomas of Celano's world-famed Sequence is sung to its original setting, though certain verses, notably "Quantus tremor est futurum," "Mors stupebit et natura," "Rex tremendæ majestatis," and "Confutatis maledictis" are taken, with an effect perfectly thrilling, *en faux bourdon*, that is to say, with harmony added to the plain-song in a manner corresponding, I suppose, to Tallis's exquisite embroidering of the plain-tune versicles and responses as set forth in the first Service Book of Edward VI. The Requiem

¹ These are "Victimæ Paschali" for Easter, "Veni Sancte Spiritus" for Whitsuntide, "Lauda Sion" for Corpus Christi, and "Dies Iræ" for Requiems. The "Stabat Mater" for Passiontide was added about 1727.

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being followed by another sung Mass, and this again by the Office of Sext, it is nearly midday before I am free to commence my researches into the architecture of Notre-Dame, but upon the minutiae of which it is not my intention in this work to dwell. For these I would refer the reader to Père Dubreul's "*Théâtre des antiquités de Paris*," to an admirable account in that sumptuous work "*Paris à travers les Ages*," to the "*Description de Notre-Dame*" put forth in 1856 by M.M. Guilhermy and Viollet-le-Duc, to the several excellent monographs both in English and French that have since appeared, and to Victor Hugo's world-famed romance, which most visitors will have in their minds, if not actually in their hands, when examining the various parts of this superb edifice.

I propose rather, in terms as brief and concise as possible, to call attention to the various structural changes the metropolitan church of France has undergone, and the vicissitudes of violent spoliation and reverent, if not always judicious, embellishment and repair to which it has been subjected at different epochs of its chequered history.

Of the six great French churches whose names stand out with peculiar distinctness from the pages of architectural lore—Amiens, Bourges, Chartres, Paris, Rheims, and Rouen—the premier place must, chronologically, be awarded to Paris.

Notre-Dame is to France what the choir of Canterbury is to England, her vastest and most noble example of the Transition—a structure in which the great principles of Pointed architecture stand prominently forward, even before the Pointed arch had fully assumed its sway. I am, of course, not unmindful of such structures as Laon, Noyon, portions of Chartres and St. Denis, Châlons-sur-Marne and St. Remi at Rheims, all specimens of the Transition and all of which had made considerable progress before the commencement of Notre-Dame.

With the establishment of Christianity in Paris, probably about A.D. 365, under Valentinian I, a church was founded at the eastern extremity of the city in honour of St. Stephen—ever a favourite dedication in France¹—and a bishop's stool deposited therein. This earliest church was situated to the south of the site occupied by the present building. Placed in a city ever rich, populous, and greedy of novelty, this basilica—for such one would imagine it to have been—was deemed inadequate when Clovis raised Paris to the dignity of capital of a Christian kingdom.

About 555 Childebert I, Clovis's successor, yielding to the entreaties of St. Germain, caused a second cathedral to be constructed a little to the north of this church of St. Stephen, which he dedicated to the Blessed Virgin.

¹ The protomartyr is honoured at the following cathedrals:—Agen, Bourges, Cahors, Châlons-sur-Marne, Limoges, Meaux, Metz, Sens, and Toulouse.

NOTRE-DAME, PARIS

Venantius Fortunatus, the courtly bishop of Poitiers—to whom we are indebted, among others, for the Christmas hymns “*Agnoscat omne saeculum,*” “*Maria ventre concepit,*” “*Præsepe poni pertulit,*” and “*Adam vetus quod polluit,*” but above all, for the noble Easter processional “*Salve festa dies*” and the “*Vexilla Regis prodeunt,*”¹ which forms, as it were, the keynote of our Offices from Passion Sunday to Good Friday—Venantius Fortunatus has left a pompous but it is to be feared somewhat apocryphal account of this structure, which in his religious enthusiasm he compares with Solomon's Temple in point of splendour. For a long time Childebert's Notre Dame shared cathedral dignity with the adjacent St. Etienne. It was at the altar of Notre Dame that Frédégonde took refuge, and found an inviolable place of shelter after the assassination of Chilperic in 584. Synods held in Paris sat sometimes in one and sometimes in the other church, and when in 886 the Normans laid siege to the city, it was in St. Etienne that the religious of St. Germain des Près placed the venerated relics of their patron safe from these Northern barbarians.

At the beginning of the tenth century the two cathedrals were in a very dilapidated condition, but the care of the bishops was chiefly concentrated on Notre Dame. It was restored in 907 under Bishop Anscérie, Charles the Simple being a liberal contributor to the work. In 1123 the roof was repaired, and a few years later Archdeacon Etienne de Gorlande undertook sundry works of embellishment, the Abbé Suger afterwards to become illustrious by his church of St. Denis—enriching it with stained glass. However, in spite of these works of renovation and adornment the old Merovingian church neither met the requirements of the increasing population of Paris nor kept pace with those great works of Christian art which were making such strides during the second half of the twelfth century, and covering not France alone but England, Germany, Italy, and Spain with churches emanating from the minds of men whose genius was not exhausted by one single effort. In emulation of these, Maurice de Sully, sixty-second bishop of Paris,² conceived the idea of amalgamating the two collateral structures into one new cathedral designed on a scale of grandeur hitherto unattempted in France, and in 1163 he saw the first stone of the existing

¹ The “*Vexilla Regis*” was composed by Venantius Fortunatus on the occasion of the reception at Poitiers, by St. Radegund, of a portion of the True Cross sent by the Emperor of Constantinople. Many of Fortunatus's poems are addressed to Queen Radegund, to whom a church in Poitiers is dedicated—one of those early Gothic cloistered buildings with a spirelet rising out of the roof, a type of church rarely, if ever, met with in old English architecture, but which has been a good deal utilised, particularly in the suburbs of London and our large towns, within the last forty years. St. James's, Walthamstow, is a striking example of this class of church.

² The Archbishopric of Paris was established on the demand of Louis XIII to Pope Gregory XV in 1622. Till then it was a suffragan see to Sens. Jean François de Godi was the first archbishop, ruling from 1622 to 1654.

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structure laid by Pope Alexander III, then an exile in that country. Nineteen years later—on the Wednesday after Whitsun Day, 1182—Henri de Château Marçay, legate of the Holy See, consecrated the high altar, and Maurice de Sully was superintending the final touches to the choir when death snatched him in 1196 from the cares of his diocese and the work whose progress he had watched with such pride. By this time, however, the works in the transepts and nave had advanced very far, and this is attested by their unity of design; by the great cylindrical piers of the former, which with their capitals carved in a bold development from Corinthian lines are identical in design with those in the choir; and by the tympanum, a lintel, some voussoirs and two corbels in the style of the twelfth century still existing in the great south-western portal of St. Anne. This resetting of fragments of an earlier in a later church is no novelty in ecclesiastical design. On the south side of the late thirteenth-century cathedral of St. Benigne, at Dijon, there is a remarkably fine doorway dating from about 1150; and when at Bourges the cathedral was rebuilt *de novo* between 1220 and 1250, the great north and south doorways,¹ composed for the most part of effigies and bas-reliefs of the twelfth century, were replaced there by the architects of the thirteenth. Thus at Paris we may observe that the second lintel and bas-relief in the tympanum of St. Anne's doorway stand in their replacement upon a thirteenth-century lintel. The outline of the great tympanum describing a more obtuse Pointed arch than those of the central and northern doorways, the thirteenth-century architect has filled up the space so left by ornament of that period; the voussoirs of the twelfth century are placed in a row of voussoirs of the succeeding one, and the foliage which terminates two corbels of the twelfth century is not continued on the pilasters of the thirteenth. It is most probable that Maurice de Sully's façade having been raised only to the height of the portals was not thought dignified enough or capable of junction with the last plans of the thirteenth-century architect, who destroyed them while preserving some of their sculptured portions for the adornment of his own work.

In all essentials Notre-Dame was complete in 1208, and as it is safe to put the western towers at 1220, the energy with which this vast undertaking was accomplished in so short a period is truly marvellous. That spires were intended to crown the towers there is not the least doubt, their bases remaining apparent in the interior. But although these spires would have formed a noble termination to a façade upon which so dignified a severity is impressed, it may be questioned whether such an addition, however authentic, would meet with general approval. They would alter the character of a building that by many

¹ These noble Late Romanesque portals at Bourges formerly admitted to the transepts, which it will be remembered were dispensed with on the rebuilding of the cathedral in the thirteenth century.



THE WEST FRONT, NOTRE DAME

NOTRE-DAME, PARIS

people is accepted as ideal, for old associations count much in judging of a church—more particularly one whose outline is so familiar to us as Notre-Dame at Paris. M. Viollet-le-Duc's flèche at the crossing is characterised by much greater exuberance and fancy than the mediæval one destroyed in the eighteenth century, and undoubtedly does much towards relieving the mass of that heaviness almost inseparable from a cruciform church where the central tower is wanting.

Determined, as I have said, that his cathedral for Paris should surpass all others in amplitude and splendour, De Sully laid out the ground plan with a double aisle throughout nave and choir.¹ The tall arcade having as yet hardly made its appearance, he surmounted his aisles with one of those lofty tribunes that had already become so noble a feature in the architecture of the Ile de France. Above this he placed a third storey relieved by large traceried circles, which in its turn received a clerestory of single lancet windows, but that the elevation could have been a really pleasing one is doubtful.

Perhaps the most beautiful feature of the building is the procession of columns dividing the double aisles—cylindrical throughout in the choir, and cylinders alternating with graceful clusters in the nave. Indeed, I question whether the Pointed styles have given birth to anything more beautiful than the vistas, either across or looking straight up these double aisles, at Paris. An extremely fine feature and one showing great ingenuity is the arrangement of these arcades in what is termed the *pourtour du chœur*, or that part of the aisles which follow the line of the apse, which, as at Notre-Dame, Châlons, and St. Remi at Rheims, is a perfect semicircle.

The arches opening from the apse into the choir are five in number, but in the arcade separating the aisles they are doubled—a plan involving the placing of a column in the second series of arcades opposite the centre of each arch in the first series. This arrangement may be seen in the view of the interior looking east. Here the vaulting compartments are all as nearly as possible equal triangles in plan—a form of vaulting used alternately with square compartments in the aisle encompassing "the Round" of our Temple Church, a contemporary work, where the problem is solved with even greater skill. Of all the six great French churches named above, there is perhaps none in which dissection is more profitable than it is in the case of Notre-Dame at Paris. There does not appear to have been a series of chapels here in addition to the two ambulatories, or if there were they projected so slightly as to have little or no effect on the ground plan. The present corona of chapels is a work of the end of the thirteenth

¹ Only three other French cathedrals were thus planned—Bourges, Meaux, and Troyes.

century, but a great part of the exterior cornice of the Transitional aisle is still visible. Above them, indeed, the primitive aspect of the choir underwent such changes in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries as to require some patience in unravelling the thread of its history. The original quadruple division of the elevation internally has already been alluded to. The clerestory was lighted by large Pointed windows placed under the ribs of the great vault. They were without tracery, and their archivolts and almost Romanesque nook-shafts can still be discerned despite the change they have undergone. The tribune was, in all probability, lighted by large plain circles like we see at Mantes, and in order to resist the thrust of the main groin was constructed with pointed barrel vaults at right angles to the axis of the church. This arrangement still exists in the chevet at Mantes. Externally, this tribune was covered with a simple lean-to roof which just touched the bases of the clerestory windows, the space inside, intervening between the arches of the tribune and the cills of the clerestory windows, being relieved by large traceried circles. This storey does not exist at Mantes, where its presence would unquestionably have been an improvement, but at Laon, Noyon, Châlons, Rheims, and in the south transept at Soissons, it appears in the form of a series of low arcades.

This original elevation throughout Notre-Dame existed only until between 1230 and 1240, when from some reason which cannot be precisely explained, great structural alterations took place in the upper parts of the church. The third storey, except in certain instances which I shall refer to hereafter, disappeared in consequence of the lengthening and enlargement of the clerestory windows, which were brought down to the string-course above the tribune, and filled with the very simple tracery we now see. Simultaneously the vaulting of the tribune was altered from the transverse barrel to the ordinary cross kind, and its fenestration and system of flying buttresses entirely changed. What Maurice de Sully's original elevation was like may be gathered from those parts of the nave, choir, and transepts adjacent to the great crossing, where Mons. Viollet-le-Duc has "restored" it for us. Here, instead of one clerestory window of two lights above the tribunes we have a large traceried circle, above which is a wide single lancet. Such works as these raise speculations in thinking minds as to whether M. Viollet-le-Duc intended bringing back the whole interior of Notre-Dame to the state in which De Sully left it, much in the same way as he "restored" away the later Pointed chapels that once fringed the nave aisles at Sens, to replace them by large roundheaded windows surmounting triple arcades that open into low cavernous-looking oratories.

That Sully's interior, with its speluncar tribunes and dimly-lighted clerestory, was thought gloomy is not improbable, and there can be little doubt that this



THE NAVE LOOKING EAST, NOTRE-DAME

NOTRE-DAME, PARIS

feeling engendered those architectural changes which I have endeavoured to point out.

Scarcely had these great modifications in the upper parts of the church been completed than greater ones were undertaken on the ground floor. The original fenestration of the nave aisles was by simple Pointed windows without tracery, one of which is still visible under that buttress of the southern tower which is embedded in the wall of the aisle. Between 1240 and 1290 the twelfth-century aisle walls were entirely removed to make way for a series of chapels called forth by those endowments for religious services which, about the period in question, were becoming multiplied. It is singular that at Notre-Dame the work should, contrary to usual custom, have begun in the nave. Conceived in that new era of architecture which had just budded in the land, and which had waited, apparently, but this opportunity to expand here into maturity, these chapels at Notre-Dame were formed between the enormous projecting buttresses of the nave—an addition which, taken in conjunction with the enlargement of the clerestory, seriously interfered with the harmony of the original design, besides giving undue width to its ground plan. Each chapel is lighted by a large traceried window in the best style of the age of St. Louis, surmounted on the exterior by a gable.

Maurice de Sully's transeptal façades having terminated in a line with his double aisles, this system of chapel extension naturally called for their removal and reconstruction, one bay, commensurate in depth with the chapels, being added to both transepts, and their present façades, each with a noble rose and series of small two-light windows below, given to them. Beautiful as they are, it is impossible not to deplore the loss of the twelfth century design for these transept fronts, whose non-projection beyond the line of the aisles must then, as now, have deprived the ground plan of Notre-Dame of that pronounced cruciform character which distinguishes the cathedrals of England, where no idea of such excrescences as double aisles or chapels, except in one instance, seems ever to have been entertained.

In North Germany the cross form would have disappeared, not only on paper but in reality; for during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries many a clerestoried church of the Romanesque epoch was transformed into one exhibiting the "hall" arrangement of three naves vaulted at the same level,¹ and so begabed as to render their distinction from the transept apparent only in the later character of their details, for in most cases the original transept front was left intact. The Dom at Minden, St. Nicholas at Lemgo, and the minsters at

¹ As, for instance, St. Martin and St. Catherine at Brunswick, and St. Martin at Minden, where the diagnosis is most interesting.

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Hameln and Herford exemplify this treatment, which may be best studied in the province of their locale—Westphalian Prussia.

The following inscription, cut on the base of the southern portal, enables us to fix 1257 as the date of the extension of the transepts at Notre-Dame :—
“Anno Domini MCCLVII mense Februario idus secundo hoc fuit inceptum Christi genetricis honore Kallensi Lathomo vivente Johanne magistro”—St. Louis being king, Regnault de Corbeil bishop of Paris, Jean de Chelles the master of the works, and the period perhaps the most glorious in the architectural history of Europe.

Contemporary with the gables of the transepts are the first three chapels on either side of the choir, which, together with the exquisite little Porte Rouge in the northern aisle, are De Corbeil's work. In building the choir chapels their promoters had perforce to adopt a mode of construction different from that pursued in the nave, the twelfth-century buttresses not projecting far enough from the walls of the aisles to give them sufficient depth. This gives the *rationale* of the continuous decoration of the walls of these chapels without returns or projections. To the first half of the fourteenth century we must assign the chapels encircling the apse.

The deeds of foundation of some of these date from 1324, and although built at different times and by several donors are uniform in style—best Middle Pointed, with scarcely a *souffçon* of the Flamboyant. Contemporary with these chapels is the reconstruction of the great pinnacles placed at the base of the flying buttresses that encircle the choir, also the five gabled windows lighting the tribune of the apse, besides all the small flying buttresses placed between the two greater ones, and serving to prop the *pourtour* of the tribune.

Thus by the middle of the fourteenth century the cathedral of Paris had assumed the shape we see to-day, and, what is a rarity in the Ile de France, we find no trace of fifteenth-century work, nothing being left for future ages to accomplish, at least externally, the spires excepted.

The middle of the fourteenth century witnessed the completion of those sumptuous choir fittings of which a portion of the parclose screens alone remains as a witness. If Viollet-le-Duc is to be credited, the rood-loft, destroyed at the beginning of the eighteenth century, must, together with the parcloes, the arrangements of the sanctuary and the stained glass which filled the windows throughout the church, have presented a spectacle of magnificence almost unparalleled.

“Le chœur de l'église Notre-Dame,” says Père Dubreul in his “Théâtre des Antiquités de Paris,” “est clos d'un mur percé à jour autour du grand autel, au haut duquel sont représentés, en grand, personnages de pierre dorés et bien



THE PORTE ROUGE BEFORE RESTORATION, NOTRE-DAME
(From a Drawing)

NOTRE-DAME, PARIS

peints, l'histoire du Nouveau Testament, et plus bas l'histoire du Vieux Testament, avec des écrits au-dessous qui expliquent les dites histoires. Le grand crucifix qui est au-dessus de la grande porte du chœur,¹ avec la croix, n'est que d'une pièce, et le pied d'iceluy fait en arcade d'une autre seule pièce, qui sont deux chefs-d'œuvre de taille et de sculpture." An inscription placed on the north side above the figure of a man kneeling gave the exact date of this screen-work in Notre-Dame:—"C'est Maistre Jean Pravy, qui fut maçon de Notre-Dame l'espace de vingt-six ans, et commencha ces nouvelles histoires, et Maistre Jean Bouteiller les a parfaites en l'an MCCCCLI."

¹ The rood-loft.

CHAPTER VII

NOTRE-DAME: ITS DECLINE AND FALL

A GLOOMY chapter now opens in the annals of Notre-Dame, for early in the eighteenth century a series of mutilations and vandalisms was inaugurated and persisted in at frequent intervals down to the latter part of the reign of Louis Philippe, when the cathedral was placed in the hands of the scholarly M. Lassus, and subsequently in those of M. Viollet-le-Duc, from which it emerged, when the Second Empire was in its glory, one of the most beautiful churches in Northern Europe. In 1699, under the pretext of accomplishing the vow of Louis XIII, not only were a great portion of the parcloises, all the stalls, the altars, and the episcopal effigies which covered the pavement of the sanctuary swept away, but the lower stages of the apse were remorselessly travestied into Italian Renaissance, much in the same manner as we see even to-day at Chartres.

Some idea of the choir of Notre-Dame in its Classic mask may be gathered from David's well-known picture, in which Napoleon Bonaparte is represented as placing the crown on the head of the Empress Josephine.

In 1725 the jubé was demolished and replaced by marble altars in the Paganised Grecian taste of that period—a piece of wanton mischief that was not confined to Paris but was going on with clerical sanction in almost every cathedral and great church throughout France. Not content with this, the Cardinal Archbishop de Noailles caused the interior to be whitewashed for the first time, while externally the gargoyles were replaced by descending leaden pipes, and the rose window and entire gable of the southern transept “restored” in such a manner that its original character was quite lost.

It was probably about this time that a series of pictures supported on beams placed just at the springing of the arches, which they completely concealed, was fixed all down the nave and choir. Engravings of a painting representing Marie Antoinette returning thanks for the birth of a Dauphin on January 21, 1782, show these pictures, which became a favourite mode of embellishment in French ecclesiastical interiors during the eighteenth



NOTRE DAME, 1840

(From Chopin, *La Vierge*, *Monumental et Architectural*, 1840)

NOTRE-DAME: ITS DECLINE AND FALL

century. They appear in views of the choir of Beauvais by Wild, and in the "Cathedrals" of Chapuy and Winkles, and until comparatively recent years they existed at Meaux.

Between 1740 and 1760, the stained glass was removed throughout the cathedral, with the exception of that in the three great roses. All this was bad enough, but a still more atrocious piece of vandalism was to come. In 1771, Soufflot, the chief architect of the Government and the designer of the Panthéon, removed the central pillar of the great western portal in order to leave a passage at the time of external processions for the stiff buckram canopies which were used in France, until the revival of a purer taste, in place of the flexible stuffs used in Italy. Soufflot's main object being to widen the door, his first act was to remove the central column and to destroy The Teaching Christ, for which, one may say, the whole portal existed. But with this he did not rest satisfied, for, looking at the heavy triangular tympanum with its representation of the Doom, he thought to himself that it looked top-heavy, and now that its old support had gone, awkward consequences might ensue. He therefore cut through the relief and the carving, brought his chisel just where a fine sweeping curve might be traced, dividing kings in the middle, cutting saints slantwise, and removing angels, till he had opened a small pointed arch of his own within the tympanum. In this hideous condition the central doorway of Notre-Dame remained till 1845, when Montalembert successfully appealed for its restoration.

A few years earlier Soufflot—who, by the way, seems to have been a French edition of "Wyatt the destructive"—had demolished a portion of the ancient archiepiscopal palace, much of which was of twelfth-century date, and built into the south choir aisle that heavy sacristy which, as may be seen in the accompanying illustration from Chapuy, absolutely forced its way into the western chapels.

Other atrocities committed through the Bœotian ignorance of the eighteenth century with regard to matters architectural were the re-chiselling of all the bases of the pillars in the interior of the cathedral to veneer them with Languedoc marble; the cutting away entirely of all the decorations and the projections of the buttresses of the western façade and of the southern nave chapels, replacing them with a smooth wall covered with squared freestone; the renewal of white-wash, and the destruction of the colossal statue of St. Christopher which stood against the first pillar on the right hand as the nave was entered.

Then came the great Revolution, when the lilies of France were trampled in the dust, and her "glories," the cathedrals, abbeys, and churches, desecrated by acts of ribaldry and sacrilege, and in not a few instances razed to the ground.

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Amongst those that shared this latter fate were the cathedrals of Arras, Avanches, Boulogne, Cambrai, and Dijon, the abbeys of Cluny and St. Martin at Tours, and the church of St. Nicasius at Rheims.¹

As a *combe* to the long series of barbarisms and mutilations inflicted on Notre-Dame, the twenty-eight statues of kings, each ten feet high, which adorned the lower gallery of the façade were thrown down, the effigies guarding the portals decapitated, such of the votive monuments and tombs as had survived the Italianising vandals of the early part of the century broken open and their contents dispersed, the sacristy rifled of its contents, the central *flèche* overthrown and its lead converted into bullets. But the venerable cathedral was destined to drink the bitter cup to the dregs. After the execution of the Queen on October 16, 1793, when those demagogues of the extreme revolutionary party—Chaumette, Hébert, Cloodt, and Chabot—began their onslaught on Christianity, their first blow was aimed at the National Church.

It was decreed by the Convention that the Feast of Reason should be inaugurated in Notre-Dame on November 10. That day the cathedral was profaned by a series of sacrilegious outrages unparalleled in the history of Christendom. The abomination of desolation sat in the holy place. "Chaumette, seconded by Lais, an actor at the opera, had arranged the plan of the fête. Mdle. Maillard, an actress in the full bloom of youth and talent, formerly a favourite of the Queen and high in popular admiration, had been compelled by Chaumette's threats to play the part of divinity of the people. She entered borne on a palanquin, the seat of which was formed of oak branches. Women dressed in white and wearing tricoloured girdles, preceded her.

"Popular societies, fraternal female societies, revolutionary committees, sections, groups of choristers, singers, and opera dancers encircled the throne. With the theatrical cothurni on her feet, a Phrygian cap on her head, her frame scarcely covered with a white tunic, over which a flowing cloak of sky-blue was thrown, the priestess was borne, at the sound of instruments, to the foot of the altar, and placed on the spot where the adoration of the faithful so lately sought the mystic bread transformed into a divinity. Behind her was a vast torch, emblematical of the light of philosophy, destined henceforward to be the sole flame of

¹ Even at the present day almost every French city and large town contains one or more churches still diverted from their sacred uses. Among them may be enumerated St. Etienne le Vieux, St. Nicholas, and St. Giles at Caen; St. Philibert at Dijon; St. Vincent and St. Frambourg at Senlis; the churches of the Cordeliers and the Jacobins at Toulouse; and several at Angers. Although the religious establishments of such great abbatial churches as Cluny, Cîteaux, and St. Martin at Tours were dissolved at the Revolution, their actual fabrics were not immediately pulled down, but survived until the Napoleonic era, and in some cases until the Restoration of the Monarchy.

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the interior of these temples. The actress lighted this flambeau. Chaumette, receiving the censer in which the perfume was burning from the hands of the two acolytes, knelt and waved it in the air. A mutilated statue of the Virgin was lying at his feet. Chaumette apostrophised the marble and defied it to resume its place in the respect of the people. Dances and hymns attracted the eyes and ears of the spectators. No profanation was wanting in the old cathedral whose foundations were coeval with those of religion and the monarchy."¹ Atrocities too revolting even to allude to were committed later in the day in the chapels and other parts of the edifice—atrocities which were not confined to Notre-Dame, but, together with demonstrations similar to that described by Lamartine, were zealously imitated in other churches of Paris. St. Sulpice, St. Gervais, and St. Eustache were, above all others, horribly profaned, Mercier, in his "*Nouveau Paris*,"² telling us as an eye-witness that he could scarcely credit the reality of what he himself saw and heard.³

Among the spectators of this Festival of Reason in Notre-Dame was the apostate Constitutional Bishop of Paris, Jean Baptiste Gobel. Present under compulsion, the unhappy man viewed from one of the tribunes, with tears of mingled shame and sorrow streaming down his countenance, that horrible parody of sacred rites which he had himself celebrated, but a few days before, at the high altar.

Mention of this person recalls one of the most singular and at the same time dreadful epochs in the history of that antique edifice of national grandeur which for some time previous to the outbreak of the Great Revolution had been tottering to its fall—the Gallican Church. That it stood in need of reform must have been patent to its most devoted adherents, but unfortunately this was not to be accomplished without treatment of a more drastic character than it either desired or deserved.

It will be remembered that in 1789, when every means was practised to force upon the National Assembly a course of unmitigated Church spoliation, coupled with the oath⁴ which the clergy were required to take to the Constitution, many ecclesiastics, panic stricken, determined at this trying moment to abandon their sees or parochial cures, and leave the country, a step which placed a very powerful weapon in the hands of their enemies. Some joined the

¹ Lamartine, *Histoire des Girondistes*.

² Tome iv. capp. 45, 65.

³ Scenes somewhat analogous were enacted in the churches during the Commune of 1871.

⁴ This was the oath:—"Je jure d'être fidèle à la nation, à la loi, et au Roi, et de maintenir de tout mon pouvoir, en tout ce qui est de l'ordre politique, la constitution décrétée par l'Assemblée et acceptée par le Roi, exceptant formellement les objets qui dépendent essentiellement de l'autorité spirituelle."

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Court of the Comte de Provence (afterwards Louis XVIII, "Le Désiré") at Coblenz, and not a few found their way to our shores, where they met with a very cordial reception, the clergy of the Church of England, to their eternal honour, vieing with many lay individuals in offering hospitality to the fugitives,¹ large numbers of whom were lodged in the ancient royal residence known as the King's House at Winchester. Certain prelates, notably those of Angoulême, Dol, Tréguier, and Troyes, arrived in a state of great necessity. During their enforced residence amongst us several, among whom were Du Chalmaret of Coutances, Le Mintier of Tréguier, Grimaldi of Noyon, De-la-Marche of St. Pol de Leon, the Archbishop of Narbonne, and the Bishop of Evreux, died and were interred in old St. Pancras churchyard.²

Of these legitimate prelates of Louis XVI only seven were left in 1810, and this number was soon reduced to four. Most of them had denounced the Concordat of 1801 as a work of iniquity and corruption, and refused to return to their old sees. For many years this remnant of the old episcopate presided over a fractional communion known as "la petite Eglise." The last of Louis XVI's hierarchy was De Thémynes of Blois, who died in 1829, when the line became extinct. On the restoration of the monarchy in 1814 he was again invited to return, but steadily declined. "No," wrote the conscientious old bishop, "in order to induce a French prelate to return to his native land after such sufferings it is not sufficient that the monarchy has been restored; he requires, in addition, the entire and absolute restoration of the religion of his fathers."

Other ecclesiastics of every grade who, from various causes, were unable to flee the country, or who had resolved to remain firm to their convictions, not only endured martyrdom, but were subjected to a systematic course of cruelty and indignity that created a thrill of horror throughout the civilised world—

¹ A well-known ecclesiastic of the English Church, not long since dead, was wont to say that he traced the great Tractarian movement to this emigration of the French clergy.

² Several reasons have been given for the selection of Old St. Pancras churchyard as a burial-place by Roman Catholics. "Of late," says Strype, "those of the Roman Catholic religion have affected to be buried here, and it has been assigned as a reason that prayer and Mass are said daily in St. Peter's for their souls, as well as in a church dedicated to St. Pancras in the South of France." Windham's Diary offers another explanation of the choice:—"While airing one day with Dr. Brocklesby, in passing and returning by St. Pancras Church, he [Dr. Johnson] fell into prayer, and mentioned, upon Dr. Brocklesby inquiring why the Roman Catholics chose that spot for their burial-place, that some Roman Catholics in Queen Elizabeth's time had been burnt there." It is also understood that this church was the last whose bell tolled in England for Mass, and in which any rites of the Roman Catholic religion were celebrated after the Reformation. The crosses with "Requiescat in Pace" or the initials of these words, "R.I.P.," on the monuments and tombstones are very frequent. At the beginning of the last century the French emigrant clergy were buried here at the average rate of thirty a year, but since the general upheaval, consequent upon the conversion of the churchyard into a "recreation ground," it is difficult to know where to look for any particular gravestone.

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hacked with sabres and pierced by pikes in the prisons of Paris during the three terrible days of September 1792; guillotined at Arras and Cambrai under Lebon, at Orange under Maignet, and under Carrier at Nantes, till the headsman sank worn out, when "noyading" was resorted to; fusilladed in the Brotteaux at Lyons under Collot d'Herbois; and herded like cattle on board ship, where they lay at anchor for long months in the roads of the Isle of Aix, "looking out on misery, vacuity, waste sands of Oleron, and the ever moaning brine."

In 1790 eighty episcopal sees, together with numberless parochial cures, were rendered vacant by the resignation of their legitimate occupants. "I die in the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion, in that of my fathers, in that in which I have been brought up and which I have always professed, having no spiritual consolation to expect, not knowing if priests of this religion still exist here—and even the place in which I am would expose them too much were they once to enter it." So runs a portion of that touchingly beautiful letter indited by Marie Antoinette to her sister-in-law, the saintly Madame Elizabeth, from the dark hall of the Conciergerie wherein the condemned awaited the executioner at "half-past four in the morning this 16th October," the day on which she was to die.

Several Republican priests offered their services to the Queen in her last moments, but while touched by the seemliness of their manners and conversation, she refused them with an expression of gratitude and regret.

Of the bishops appointed under Louis XVI, two only had taken the oath to the Constitution—Talleyrand of Autun and Gobel of Lydda *in partibus*, both ardent partisans of the Revolution. They were, however, joined by Lomenie de Brienne, Archbishop of Sens, Jarente of Orleans, and Lafont de Savines of Viviers, none of whom had seats in the House. It then became necessary to fill up the vacant sees and livings, but as the men who were forced into them owed their appointments to the indiscriminate suffrages of an ignorant populace, and as their consciences must have warned them that they were intruders into sees already canonically occupied, it is no wonder that the majority of them proved weak when the day of trial came, bending like reeds before the blast in powerless submission to the party then in the ascendant.

Gobel, who was chosen simultaneously in three dioceses—Haute Marne, Haut Rhin, and Seine¹—made his choice of the last-named (Paris) from its greater wealth and importance, but as he was unable to obtain canonical institution from the Archbishop of Sens or the Bishop of Orleans, to whom he had

¹ At first these Constitutional bishops took their titles from the departments in which their sees were located.

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applied, he was referred to Talleyrand, who, as might be supposed, opposed no bar. Vested with no authority to act in capacity of Metropolitan beyond what he derived from the National Assembly, Talleyrand gave Gobel the semblance, not the reality, of canonical institution, and this, ecclesiastically speaking, was invalid.

On St. Matthias Day, February 24, 1791, Talleyrand, assisted by Gobel and Mirondet, another bishop *in partibus*, gave a signal proof of his devotedness to the new régime by consecrating the first two Constitutional bishops—Expilly to Quimper and Marolles to Soissons—in the church of the Oratoire at Paris.

The ceremonial prescribed in the Roman Pontifical was adhered to in the main, but with the omission of some of the customary formalities, including the oath of obedience to the Pope. The protest of the Chapter of Quimper, administering the affairs of that diocese, and that of the nonjuring Bishop of Soissons, passed unheeded. Soon after this Talleyrand, who detested a profession into which he had been forced against his will, lost no time in abandoning it for the secular life, leaving the task of filling up the vacant sees and parishes to Gobel. One of the first to receive the imposition of hands was Grégoire, who, by his general ability, learning, and consistency, proved one of the most respectable of the Constitutional prelates. He was elected to the see of Loir-et-Cher, afterwards styling himself as of Blois. Others who played a more or less conspicuous part in the ecclesiastical events of 1791-94 were Lecoz of Rennes, Moise of the Jura, Sauvigne of the Landes, De la Roche of Rouen, Lindet of Evreux, Sequin of Besançon, Fauchet of Calvados, and Lamourette of Lyons. By the end of May, 1791, all the new sees and parishes had been filled up, but as the election of their occupants was regarded as anomalous and disorderly by upholders of the nonjuring clergy, constant fracas arose between the opposing parties in the churches—a Constitutional priest at Caen narrowly escaping being hanged on the sanctuary lamp of his own church by a mob, chiefly of women.

This anomalous and scandalous state of things continued in the Church of France until the current of the Revolution turned towards open terrorism and the proscription of religion. The Constitutional clergy, instigated by motives of any and every sort, by intimidation, flattery, promise of reward and promotion, ascended their pulpits to declare that they had hitherto been impostors, and day after day the Assembly sat to receive their abdications. This was in the autumn of 1793, after "the worn, discrowned Widow of Thirty-eight" had been drawn to the scaffold. Now began the pillage and defilement of the holy places from Arras to Avignon, from Metz to Bayonne, from Morlaix to Vienne. Then was the shrine of St. Geneviève let down and burnt in the Place de Grève, the

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tombs of the kings in St. Denis ransacked, the Sainte Ampoule broken upon the public place at Rheims, office books and sacerdotal vestments torn to shreds and burnt in large piles, stained glass shattered to atoms or pilfered by collectors,¹ saintly effigies mutilated, reliquaries and sacristies rifled of their contents, crucifixes, crosses and ecclesiastical insignia of every kind torn from their positions, and sacred ceremonies derisively parodied. Republican songs and dances profaned the churches whose walls but a few days before had resounded to the solemn Gregorian chant in introit and gradual, in credo and prose, in antiphon, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis. Christian Europe stood aghast, and wondered whether this could be the France of Philippe the August, of Louis the Saint, of the Chevalier Bayard, of Jeanne d'Arc, of Henri of Navarre.

It was by this apostasy, by this abdication of exterior Catholicism—one of the most characteristic acts of the spirit of the Revolution—that the intruded clergy sought to curry favour with the party of Robespierre; but it was a case of

"Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charybdim,"

for they experienced the full share of a pitiless persecution which their own earlier conduct had too clearly, however unintentionally, contributed to bring about, meeting the Red Terror just when it was at its height. The heads of eight Constitutional bishops, who in some way or another proved obnoxious to the Jacobins, fell under the axe. Four had been conspicuous for their adherence to the principles of the Revolution, Fauchet, Lamourette, Gobel, and Expilly. Fauchet, of Calvados, suffered a fortnight later than the Queen, together with twenty-one deputies of the Gironde, after a trial which lasted a week.

During his imprisonment with the Girondists in the last place of their detention prior to execution—the Conciergerie—Fauchet retained his once-broken attachment to the Catholic faith with the zeal of a martyr.

Every day he read his breviary, a portion of Scripture and a chapter of the "Imitation of Jesus Christ." But his favourite study was the Apocalypse, for in that he fancied that St. John had predicted the Jacobin Club, the reign of Robespierre, the "Noyades" of Carrier, and even the "Carmagnole" of Barère.

Notwithstanding this the amount of stained glass retained by the Northern French churches, and ranging from the end of the twelfth to the beginning of the seventeenth centuries, is marvellous. The clerestory and rose windows of Auxerre, Beauvais, Bourges, Clermont Ferrand, Evreux, Le Mans, Metz, Rheims, St. Ouen at Rouen, Séz, Sens, Soissons, Strasburg, Tours, and Troyes are full of it. Nowhere is holy writ more gloriously expressed than in the storied panes of Chartres, while the churches of St. Etienne at Beauvais, Caudebec, St. Pierre at Chartres, Louviers, St. Remi at Rheims, St. Godard, St. Patrice and St. Vincent at Rouen, and St. Urbain at Troyes, boast goodly supplies. In some cases the old glazing was preserved from utilitarian motives—for example, at St. Ouen, Rouen, which was partly converted into a forge.

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Gensonné and Brissot—two of the condemned Girondists—listened with amazement to the fervour of his harangues. Lamourette, the brave bishop of Lyons, who certainly deserved a better fate, and who, prior to ascending the scaffold, had, under the guidance of the intrepid Abbé Emery, asked forgiveness of God for having taken uncanonical possession of that see, went to his death January 10, 1794. The weak, pusillanimous but not deliberately wicked Gobel met with little sympathy, and on April 13 of the same year was conveyed, together with Chaumette and the widows of Hébert and Camille Desmoulins, from the Revolutionary Tribunal along the Rue St.-Honoré, amid the horrid *Allons! Marchons!* of the Revolutionary guard, to the spot where now the fountains sparkle around the obelisk of Luxor. De Juigné, the nonjuring archbishop of Paris, likewise perished under the axe. Expilly, of Quimper, lingered till June 21, when he was guillotined at Brest. Grégoire, of Blois, who, of all the intruded bishops was the most to be respected, refused to apostatise, and this intrepidity in all probability saved his life.

On Sunday, November 17, 1793, all the churches of Paris were closed by authority, with the exception of St. Nicholas Chardonnet, St. Victor, and St. Ambroise, the Commune, among other preposterous votes, demanding one for the demolition of the church steeples, much after the manner of the Anabaptists of Munster in 1534, because, towering above the buildings, they tended to cross the Republican principle of equality. This state of things, which was not confined to Paris, but extended to the cathedrals and churches throughout France, almost without exception, lasted until early in 1795, when, on the downfall of the Jacobins, popular demand for the free exercise of religion was, under certain restrictions, acceded to.

The Roman Catholic faith was that in which the French were brought up, and they were, from habit at least, if not from conviction, attached to it. So far was its overthrow from meeting with the general approbation and concurrence of the nation, that if it was acquiesced in for a time, it was merely from a feeling of inability to avert the blow; and the persecution which it experienced only served, as all persecution does, to endear the object of it more strongly to them. Such would have been the effect even if the attempt made had only been to substitute by force some other mode of faith in its place. But when the question was to annihilate religion itself, no sane mind could possibly dream of ultimate success. The sense of dependence upon some unseen Power far above our comprehension is a principle inherent in human nature—no nation has yet been discovered, however remote from civilisation in customs and manners, in which some ideas of a Power superior to all earthly ones were not to be found.

The French are characterised as fond of novelty and always seeking after it

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with eagerness; and yet, however paradoxical it may appear, it is no less true that in many respects no people adhere more tenaciously to ancient habits and customs. Nothing contributed so essentially to the final overthrow of the violent revolutionists as their endeavouring all at once to deprive the people of many habits and customs which they particularly cherished; nor did anything contribute more strongly to Napoleon's power than his restoration of them.

Several chapels in the Faubourg St. Germain were then reopened under the clergy of St. Sulpice. At Châlons-sur-Marne, as we learn from the "*Annals de la Religion*,"¹ people on receiving the intelligence "seemed as if starting from a lethargic slumber into renewed life. Yesterday [the Second Sunday in Lent,² when (in the Roman Missal) the gospel for the day records the Transfiguration] was like a day of general resurrection. All work was laid aside; shops were closed throughout the day. Everyone repaired with alacrity to the church of St. Pierre, the doors of which had been thrown open by the two proprietors of the building after some hasty preparations for Divine service. First Mass was said at seven o'clock, second at eight. At half-past nine High Mass was chanted solemnly, preceded by the *Veni Creator*.³ It is impossible to describe the delight that filled all hearts at the moment. Men were almost beside themselves with ecstasy when they heard the sacred vaults resound with the praises of the Lord after so long a period of silence. Numbers were affected to tears; all with one consent prostrated themselves with their faces to the earth, in lowly compunction and penitence for their past aberrations. Snow and rain were incessant throughout the day, but did not in any degree abate the zeal of the citizens.

"From early morn up to noon the concourse was such as to suggest a literal application of the prophetic words addressed to the Church by Isaiah:—'The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.

"'Then shalt thou say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? and who hath brought up these? Behold, I was left alone; these, where had they been?'"

¹ Tome i. p. 64.

² Styled "*Reminiscere*" Sunday from the Introit, which commencing "*Reminiscere miserationum tuarum Domine*" ("Call to remembrance, O Lord, Thy tender mercies, and the loving kindness which have been ever of old") was very appropriate to this occasion. Similarly, the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Sundays in Lent are styled "*Invocabit*," "*Oculi*," "*Lætare*," "*Judica*," and "*Domine*." Easter Sunday is "*Resurrexi*," and Low Sunday "*Quasi modo*."

³ In the Church of England the Communion Service for the Sundays in Lent was extracted from the offices appointed for those Sundays in the Sarum Missal, excepting the Collect for the First Sunday, which was composed by the compilers of the Liturgy, and the Gospel for the Second Sunday.

CHAPTER VIII

NOTRE-DAME: ITS RESTORATION

IT does not appear that Notre-Dame was *rendue au culte* until the Festival of the Assumption, August 15, 1797, when the inaugural service of a conference, for which preparations had been made for some time previously, under the presidency of Claude Lecoq, Bishop of Rennes (one of the most highly respected and deeply learned of the Constitutional prelates), was held in it.

The ceremonial observed on this occasion was of the most solemn and imposing character, the ground floor and tribunes of the vast basilica—which the recent profanations had left in a shocking state—being thronged with spectators, who, as the two long lines of ecclesiastics, headed by the processional crucifix, advanced with stately steps towards the choir from the west door, gave vent to an involuntary outburst of applause. In his opening address the Bishop of Rennes expatiated on the extraordinary scene presented in the cathedral that day. “Who could have imagined that that august temple, which had so recently witnessed the frantic excesses of a blasphemous philosophism, which impious hands had so shamefully profaned and pillaged, should after so brief an interval be restored to its original and sublime destination? Who could have expected to see crowds of venerable pontiffs and virtuous pastors reassembled round its altars for the celebration of Divine mysteries, who but lately were the victims of a savage persecution, fugitives wandering from cavern to cavern, or groaning in the darkness of pestilential dungeons? Or who, again, could have anticipated from any consideration of merely natural causes and events that the holy religion against which all the blasts of every passion have been unchained, which had been assailed by a general conspiracy of the learned and the ignorant, the rich and the poor, the profligate and the pharisaical, and even by apostate ministers of the sanctuary—who could conceive that this religion without other arms than those of its own majestic doctrines and saintly morality should triumphantly resist those combined attacks, should exhibit to the world as pure, as lovely, as powerful as ever, and attract to itself, though arrayed in a simple and modest garb, more than twenty millions of Frenchmen?”

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Easter Day, April 18, 1802, witnessed another most impressive function within the walls of this grand old cathedral. It marked simultaneously the conclusion of European peace—soon, alas! rudely broken—and the reconciliation of France with the Catholic Church by means of a Concordat with Pope Pius VII—that boldest of Napoleon's enterprises, and one which he had been meditating for five years previously. Some of the prelates of the *ancien régime* who had taken refuge in England and elsewhere denounced the Concordat. Others were favourable to it, notably the Archbishop of Bordeaux, who wrote from London on December 8, 1801, strongly advocating such a step as putting to an end a deplorable schism that for nearly ten years had split up the clergy into hostile camps.

By the Bull, "Qui Christi Domini vices," dated Nov 29, 1801, Pius VII suppressed, annulled, and for ever extinguished all the French sees then remaining, deprived the prelates of all canonical jurisdiction, and founded in their stead ten metropolitan and fifty suffragan sees with newly-arranged territorial circumscription.¹ Annexed to it was the brief "Quoniam favente Deo," empowering the Cardinal Legate to grant canonical institution to the hierarchy about to be appointed.

After some difficulty and much discussion the new hierarchy was composed of a fusion of Constitutional and pre-Revolution clergy who had never submitted to the new *régime*, all the details being supervised by Napoleon with his usual energy. In a stirring proclamation dated April 17, 1802—the day before the ceremonial in Notre-Dame—he exhorted Frenchmen of all classes to lay aside all dissensions, to forget the mistakes of the past, and to unite in defending the institutions of the country upon the solid basis of true religion.

At eleven o'clock the Cardinal Legate Caprara, preceded by the cross and followed by all the members of his embassy, entered the cathedral by the western door. Then, headed by the venerable De Belloy—formerly of Toulouse, now Archbishop of Paris—came the long procession of newly-created archbishops and bishops in their robes. Seated beneath a canopy opposite to the Cardinal Legate, Napoleon—with Cambacérès on his right hand and Lebrun on his left—was the cynosure of all eyes.

A very curious circumstance attending this solemnity was that the sermon was delivered by the very same person who had preached at Rheims on the coronation of Louis XVI—Monseigneur Boisgelin, then Archbishop of Aix in

¹ Among the sees thus suppressed were the patriarchal ones of Alby, Auch, Arles, Narbonne, Rheims, Sens, and Vienne, but these were restored under Louis XVIII, together with thirty-four diocesan sees, Avignon and Cambrai being raised to archbishoprics. The mitres snatched in 1801 from Auxerre, Avranches, Boulogne, Dol, Laon, Lisieux, Noyon, Senlis, St. Omer, Tréguier, and many others, have never been replaced.

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Provence, now Archbishop of Tours. His discourse was allowed by all who heard it to be a very judicious one. He did not enter into politics or launch into fulsome flattery of those in power, but dwelt principally upon the necessity of an established religion, not only as a thing right in itself, but as essential to the preservation of good morals among the people, illustrating his argument by the excesses into which they had been led by the temporary abandonment of religion, and bestowing commendation upon those by whom it had been restored.

As the brilliant cortège was about to quit the cathedral, the First Consul turned to General Delmas and asked him his opinion of the ceremonial. "It was extremely fine, General," replied Delmas. "Nothing was wanting except the million of men who have lost their lives in pulling down what you are now labouring to reconstruct"—a speech which so incensed Napoleon that he banished Delmas from Court.

The next great event in the history of Notre-Dame was the coronation of Napoleon. It took place on Sunday, December 2, 1804, "a clear, serene wintry day," and the cathedral was decorated with unparalleled magnificence for the occasion. The Pope, who left the Tuileries at nine o'clock, much earlier than the Emperor, displayed admirable patience in remaining some time seated on his throne at the high altar till the Imperial procession arrived, severally greeting the sixty prelates of the Gallican Church who surrounded him with impartial kindness, and making no distinction as to the circumstances of past history.

Napoleon, having assumed the Imperial robes at the archbishop's palace, at length made his appearance, knelt at the altar, and then seated himself in a splendid chair of state. "He seemed somewhat overpowered by the weight of his robes," says Madame de Remusat. "His small form seemed ready to melt away under that enormous ermine mantle. He wore a simple circle of golden laurels, which gave his head the appearance of an antique medal. But his countenance was extremely pale, with evident marks of emotion, and his general expression severe and somewhat disturbed. The Pope, during the whole course of the ceremony, had rather the air of a submissive victim, generously resigned by an act of his own will, and for a purpose of high public importance. The service was throughout imposing and beautiful."

When the great moment arrived Pius VII approached Napoleon bearing the crown from the altar. The latter, without rudeness, but with decision, took the symbol of sovereignty out of the Pontiff's hands, and placed it on his own head—a singular innovation upon the traditions of past ages that appears to have been distinctly arranged beforehand—afterwards proceeding to crown the Empress, who knelt before him as in the scene depicted by David.

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The Napoleonic era was not friendly to Notre-Dame, architecturally speaking. At that period ecclesiastical art had reached its bathos all over Europe; the symbolism of the Renaissance and earlier pure Classical periods had been lost and nothing gained in compensation.

A noble eagle lectern, designed by Percier and Fontaine, was presented by Napoleon for the choir-rulers to chant such portions of the offices from as the Antiphons to the Psalms and Canticles at Vespers, and the Gradual and Tract at High Mass. For a time it fell into desuetude, but was restored to its proper use after the reopening of the choir in 1863. Dwarf walls of marble and grilles of polished metal were introduced within the Italianised bays of the apse to enclose the sanctuary in 1809, and four years later the exterior walls of the choir chapels emerged from a flaying process as barbarous as that perpetrated in 1773 by Boulland, the treatment of the northern portion being particularly vexatious.

The mischief went on under Louis XVIII and Charles X. It is a sad and humiliating reflection to think that the reigns of those restored "Most Christian Kings, Eldest Sons of the Church," were distinguished by the reckless destruction of many of the Christian monuments of Mediæval France, and amongst them of the abbey church of Clairvaux, which in 1816 was razed to the ground, not sparing even the tomb of St. Bernard—a worthy inauguration of the returning race of Kings.

In 1820, 50,000 francs were disbursed at Notre-Dame in restoring the ruined pavement with stone flags and mortar. In 1831 the cross on the roof of the apse was thrown down, the archbishop's palace wrecked, and the church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois sacked in one of those popular *émeutes* that marked the earlier part of the Citizen King's reign.

The archbishop of Paris at that time was Monseigneur de Quélen, a warm and conscientious supporter of the Bourbons. He had been appointed by Louis XVIII in 1821, but always preserved his connection and friendship with the distinguished personages of the Empire who formed his early friends. At the Revolution of 1830 he made no secret of his fidelity to his legitimate sovereign, Charles X, and his disapprobation of the new *régime*.

As an ecclesiastical peer Monseigneur de Quélen was excluded from the Upper Chamber, and as an ecclesiastic and leading partisan of the fallen dynasty was chosen by the Government and the mob as a peculiar object of persecution. Encouraged by the Ministry of the day, the populace assailed the archiepiscopal palace with peculiar fury, headed by officers of the National Guard and various persons of influence with the *bourgeoisie* of Paris. In the course of two days the palace—that ancient and interesting residence still retaining portions built by Maurice de Sully, and which stood on the south side of the cathedral—

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was levelled with the ground. The infuriated mob threw all the archbishop's library, all his furniture and valuables into the Seine that flowed beneath the windows, broke up and stole most of his plate and all the money found in the palace. Had the prelate fallen into the hands of the mob, he would certainly have been sacrificed, and thus have added to the list of archbishops of Paris who within a century met with a violent end.¹ It was on this occasion that the people broke into the sacristy of Notre-Dame and mutilated the splendid sacerdotal vestments given by Napoleon, together with the Emperor's own coronation robes, in order to possess themselves of the jewellery with which they were studded. A more disgraceful scene hardly occurred during the great Revolution, and it was one of the many faults with which Louis Philippe might be fairly reproached, since it was fully in the power of his Government to have prevented it. The archbishop was too sensible of his own dignity to demand any compensation for his losses from the party in power or from the municipality of Paris, and neither the latter body nor the Legislature had either the honour or the justice ever to make him any indemnification. The prelate then took up his residence in the Convent of the Dames du Sacré Cœur, in the Rue de Varennes, and thenceforth spent his time between that place and the country seat of the archbishops at Conflans.

On the breaking out of the cholera in 1832 the zeal of Monseigneur de Quélen for his suffering flock was indefatigable, the whole of his comparatively slender means being given in aid of the sick.

When the plague ceased he instituted a noble foundation for the education and maintenance of the young girls who had been orphaned by this public calamity.

The first occasion of any public recognition of Louis Philippe by the archbishop was in 1835, when the head of the State went to Notre Dame to return thanks for his escape after Fieschi's attempt upon his life. Monseigneur de Quélen died on the last day of 1839, in the convent of the Sacré Cœur. Here his body was exposed to public view—about 3,000 persons coming every day to visit it—until January 4, when it was removed to the Lady Chapel of Notre-Dame, where it lay in state till the 9th. During this interval the public were allowed to circulate through the aisles of the choir, to go in front of the Lady Chapel

¹ De Juigné, the nonjuring archbishop, was guillotined during the Reign of Terror. Gobel, the apostate Constitutional bishop, met the same fate. Affre was shot at the barricade in the Faubourg St. Antoine during the Revolution of June 1848, when striving to make peace between the contending parties. Sibour was stabbed in the church of St. Etienne du Mont on St. Geneviève's Day, Jan. 3, 1857, by Verger, a suspended priest. Darboy was shot in the prison of La Roquette, where, together with the Abbé Déguerry, the curé of the Madeleine, President Bonjean, the Abbé Allard, and Fathers Ducoudray and Clair, he had been detained as a hostage by the Communists, May 24, 1871.

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where they might see the body and so pass on. The crowd was so great for the three days that this lasted, that a long file of many hundreds of people was formed outside the cathedral from an early hour in the morning till dark, waiting their turn for admission.

Monseigneur de Quélen is described as having been very tall, with a handsome and benevolent countenance, an air of great dignity, and when at the altar, it might be almost said, of elegance.

No one better understood or more exactly practised all the little formalities of the Catholic ritual.

Some attempts at restoration were being made in cement about the time of Monseigneur de Quélen's death, but were soon stopped.

The first dawn of better things for the ecclesiastical art of France was reserved for the last five years of the Citizen King, when, as among ourselves, the study of the true principles of Pointed architecture was beginning to evince itself.

In or about 1843, MM. Lassus and Viollet-le-Duc were called in, and a series of works inaugurated at Notre-Dame under those talented practitioners, which culminated in the reopening of the choir—much as we see it now—on April 15, 1863.

In criticising these restorations, it is necessary to bear in mind that the barbarisms of the eighteenth century had destroyed all appearance of antiquity on the exterior of the church. Many of the decorative features of the original had vanished long since and given place to mean and uninteresting botchings of debased eras. Now we have a reproduction of its original aspect, as far as that can be determined.

The erection of a suitable sacristy was one of the first things to be thought of. At the time of great solemnities, the archbishop, his chapter and his clergy were reduced to vest themselves at the foot of a staircase in a sort of vestibule without fire, in the midst of cold and draught, the business of the parochial sacristy being transacted in two lateral chapels, robbed for that purpose from the religious service and the general decoration of the structure. The present sacristy, completed in 1853, is conceived in a good early fourteenth-century style, conformably with the southern chapels of the choir from which it is entered. It was originally proposed to build it on a prolongation of the apse, but this idea was happily abandoned for the present site, where, far from being detrimental to the general mass, this necessary addition only contributes one more beauty to it.

Under the Second Empire Notre-Dame was the scene of many an imposing function. Of these perhaps the most important were the inauguration of Louis

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Napoleon as President of the French Republic on New Year's Day, 1852 ; his marriage to Eugénie de Montijo Comtesse de Teba on January 29, 1853 ; and the baptism of the Prince Imperial on June 14, 1856.

On the first named of these occasions a thick fog enveloped Paris, and notwithstanding the heat emitted by the vast number of wax lights—said to have been 13,000—the cold in Notre-Dame was intense.

For the ceremonial of the following year the naturally severe character of the building was made to assume as festive an air as its architecture would admit. The vaults of the aisles were painted blue and powdered with golden bees, and the columns enveloped, from plinth to capital, in crimson velvet ; while the looms of Lyons, Beauvais, and Amiens were put into requisition for banners suspended from airy heights and draperies from the balconies of the tribunes. The lighting, effected by an absolute forest of chandeliers (albeit of cut-glass) extending from the western door to the apse, is described as having been truly wonderful. The music at the High Mass was representatively French, the Gloria in Excelsis, Credo, and O Salutaris being sung to the music of Cherubini, the Sanctus to that of Adolphe Adam, and the Te Deum, which closed the ceremony, to that of Auber.

“It is not your Victoria who is about to visit Louis Napoleon ; but it is England about to occupy a seat at every hearth and find entry into every heart in France.” Such was the grandiloquent and truly Gallic welcome extended to us by our vivacious neighbours across the Channel in that memorable August of 1855, when our late beloved Queen and her Consort were about to return the visit paid to England in the spring of the same year by the Emperor and Empress. Her Majesty and the Prince, accompanied by Napoleon and Eugénie, paid a visit to Notre-Dame, the archbishop, Monsignor Sibour, who received the august party at the great west door, expressing his gratification at seeing our Queen, and assuring her that his clergy and himself called down on her the blessings of Heaven. Her Majesty then entered the cathedral, and we are told was so struck with its solemn beauty that she seemed unwilling to quit it.

For the baptism of the Prince Imperial on June 14, 1856,¹ the interior was polychromed in distemper, and the clerestory windows of the nave papered in imitation of grisaille, while for those of the choir some of the huge figures of kings and prophets from Bourges and Strasburg were copied on thin canvas and pasted against the glass. The effect was admirable, and the cost, of course, trifling, and if such experiments had been more frequently offered up, so that committees and the public would thus be enabled to judge of the effect likely to

¹ The ceremonial at the inauguration, the marriage, and the baptism took place under the crossing, and before a temporary altar erected at the entrance to the choir.

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be produced when the designs are executed in glass, we should have been spared many of those wretched failures that have signalised the progress of the vitreous art both at home and abroad during the last half century.

A few years later the actual reproduction of these cartoons at Notre-Dame was entrusted to M. Maréchal, of whose artistic talent Henri Gerente used to speak very highly, though he considered him as somewhat deficient in archæological knowledge. Placed as they are at a great height, it was absolutely necessary that the effigies in these windows should be very large and striking, and this object, as all must admit, has been attained, though without coarseness or undue straining after a forced antiquarianism.

The iconography of the seventeen clerestory windows in the choir—too obvious to need explanation—is as follows :—

Eastern window of the apse : The Visitation. Range of windows to the right : (1) St. Denis and Maurice de Sully ; (2) St. Gregory and St. Ambrose ; (3) St. Mark and St. Matthew ; (4) Ezekiel and Isaiah ; (5) Aaron and Melchisedec ; (6) St. Stephen and St. Laurence ; (7) St. Louis and St. Gregory ; (8) St. Remi and St. Martin.

Range of windows to the left : (1) Eudes de Sully and St. Marcel ; (2) St. Augustine and St. Jerome ; (3) St. Luke and St. John ; (4) Daniel and Jeremiah ; (5) David and Abraham ; (6) St. George and St. Martin ; (7) Charlemagne and Leo III ; (8) St. Hilary and St. Ireneus.

The glass in the *rosaces* between the tribunes and the clerestory in the bay of each of the four arms adjacent to the crossing is by Steinheil.

Of mediæval stained glass, all that Notre-Dame now possesses is in the great transeptal and western roses. It was restored in 1859 by M. Alfred Gerente, who died nearly ten years later at the early age of forty-seven. Originally educated as a sculptor, he, on the death (in 1849) of his accomplished brother, Henri, turned his talents to glass-painting, and carried on the studio founded by his brother with great assiduity and success. Alfred Gerente was an honorary member of our Ecclesiological Society, and specimens of his work are to be found in various parts of England, for example, in Ely and Oxford Cathedrals, St. Mary, Stafford, and St. Margaret, Canterbury ; but of his glass, with which nearly all the windows of All Saints, Margaret Street, were once filled, all that remains is in the baptistery.

At Notre-Dame the glass which fills the series of small two-light windows below the great transeptal roses is Alfred Gerente's work, and, like that in the Lady Chapels at Amiens, Mantes, and elsewhere, is characterised by deep study of mediæval examples and careful preservation of the unities.

An interesting and picturesque ceremony was the baptism—a few days after

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that of the Prince Imperial—of four new bells for the cathedral. It was performed by Archbishop Sibour just outside the great western doorway, with great pomp and amid an immense concourse of spectators, largely composed of the *ouvrier* class.

Each bell had two sponsors, the godfathers being the Archbishop, M. le Comte de Montalembert, M. le Comte de la Pagerie (a relative of the Emperor), and M. le Marquis de Pastoret; and the godmothers, Mdme. la Duchesse de Talleyrand Périgord, La Marquise de Juigné, La Vicomtesse de Quélen and Mdme. Affre, each of the four ladies being the relative of a former archbishop.

The death of M. Lassus in the autumn of 1857 not only deprived M. Viollet-le-Duc of a talented coadjutor, but, following as it did so closely on that of Père Martin, was a great loss, archæologically, to France.

Lassus was a friend and co-operator with our Ecclesiological Society, with which he was connected not only as an honorary member, but as an occasional contributor to the pages of its organ, "The Ecclesiologist."

In addition to his numerous works of restoration—one of the earliest and most important of which was the Sainte Chapelle—Lassus designed several churches of great magnitude and architectural excellence, among them being St. Nicholas at Nantes, the Sacré-Cœur at Moulins-sur-Allier, and the church of Belleville, near Paris.

At the time of his death Lassus was preparing an edition of that curious glimpse behind the scenes of six centuries back, the "Album" of Villard de Honnecourt, or, as the late William Burges, with an accuracy not unspiced with the sarcastic, preferred to name the thirteenth-century Picard artist, "Wilars de Honecort."

The task of bringing the work to its final publication in 1858 was left to M. Darcel. Later in the same year an English edition, corrected and enlarged, was put forth by Professor Willis, who carried out his task with consummate ability, many of the machines and mechanical puzzles which were inexplicable to the French antiquaries finding a lucid interpretation by the Cambridge *savant*.

It should not be forgotten that M. Lassus was one of the competitors for the erection of Notre-Dame-de-la-Treille at Lille, his design—with the motto "L'éclectisme est la plaie de l'art"—taking the third prize, the first and second being awarded to Messrs. Clutton & Burges and Mr. Street respectively.

A few years after the death of this talented architect, the city of Paris conferred the name of Rue Lassus on the street leading to the church of Belleville, which was almost his last work.

The death of M. Lassus left M. Viollet-le-Duc in sole charge of the restorations at Notre-Dame.

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In 1858 he undertook a very important branch of the great scheme, the internal restoration of the apse, which, it will be recollected, had been travestied into Italian, the arches rounded, &c., during the unfortunate mutilations inflicted on the building during the reign of Louis Quatorze. In the excavations necessary for the work, several of the episcopal tombs were opened and some interesting discoveries made, such as fragments of vestments, a splendid pastoral staff of the thirteenth century, enamelled; two others in wood, of the fourteenth; a silver Agnus Dei of the fourteenth century; a noble silver seal of the commencement of the thirteenth, bearing the inscription, "Francorum Regina Elizabeth Dei Gratia" (no doubt Isabel of Hainault, wife of Philip Augustus), besides an episcopal and other rings. Several leaden coffins of a later date were found in a state of preservation, but were not opened. In connection with the restoration of the apse, the magnificent series of Renaissance choir-stalls were carefully renovated, but the eight large pictures which formerly hung over them were not replaced. Each range of stalls terminates westward in an archiepiscopal throne surmounted by a canopy enriched by groups of angels holding religious *instrumenta*.

The reason why there have always been two thrones at Notre-Dame is not very clear. I believe it is the custom for the archbishop to sit in one and to preach from the other. Besides these twin archiepiscopal thrones, there are two ambones of wood at the entrance of the choir facing west. At the time of the restorations (1860-3) an eminent French liturgist—the Abbé de Courcy—protested against these ambones, objecting not only to the similarity of their design, but to the obligation they involved of the prophecy, epistle, and gospel being all read westward, and stating the curious fact that, by the ceremonials of Paris and Sens, the deacon used to read the gospel in the southern ambo, so as to be able more easily to turn to the north.

Simultaneously with these important works, which were brought to a satisfactory conclusion in 1863, the restoration of Jean de Chelle's southern transept façade was being prosecuted: some mural paintings which came to light in the northern range of chapels were restored, and the flèche, to the great improvement of the Parisian landscape, was replaced upon the crossing.

Since then the works at Notre-Dame have been chiefly confined to the embellishment of the side chapels with frescoes and stained glass, of which that in the windows of the chapels surrounding the apse is of peculiar magnificence and brilliancy, and the erection in 1874 of a new altar, Coustou's group of the Descent from the Cross being, however, retained as a reredos.

The fresco work executed throughout the side chapels of the nave and choir has doubtless been taken for granted by the million as a model, and quoted as

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an authority to be followed, with the additional weight of the honoured name of Viollet-le-Duc. It is hard to suppose that he could have been guilty of approving, much less designing it. The utter absence of any scheme in its treatment is its great defect. Proprieties and niceties of style have been disregarded, and the mixture of old Gothic forms with modern sentimentalities only makes many of the designs all the more offensive.

Four lovelier days never perhaps shone over Paris than those preceding Whit-Sunday, May 28, 1871, but they were among the most terrible in her history.

Her glories were rapidly passing away in smoke and flame, such as had never been witnessed since the burning of Moscow, amid a war of cannon, a screaming of mitrailleuses, a bursting of projectiles, and a horrid rattle of musketry from different quarters, which were appalling.

For the Commune, determined to keep its promise of perishing in a sea of blood and under a canopy of flame, fired the greater number of the public buildings in that part of the city through which they were being driven by the Versailles troops—the Tuileries, Ministry of Finance, Cour des Comptes, Hôtel de Ville, Palais Royal, Préfecture de Police, Legion d'Honneur, the Gobelins, and the Grenier d'Abondance being enveloped in sheets of flame, awful volumes of smoke rising to the sky and positively obscuring the light of the sun.

Amid the general conflagration the gravest fears were entertained for those two mediæval gems, Notre-Dame and the Sainte-Chapelle. Each, however, had a miraculous escape, particularly the former, where preparations had been made by the insurgents for blowing it into the air, when the troops of M. Thiers effected their entrance just in time to save Europe from what would have been an irreparable loss.

Before quitting Paris I must say one word upon its great contribution to Catholic hymnology. It was Tuesday afternoon, and the office hymn at vespers was one of those descriptive of the Six Days of Creation as set forth in the Roman Breviary, and which commencing—

Telluris alme Córditor
Mundi solum qui séparans,
Pulsis aquæ moléstis,
Terram dedíste immóbilem,

was thus translated in "Early Camden Days" by John Mason Neale for the "Hymnal Noted":—

Earth's mighty maker, whose command
Raised from the sea the solid land :
And drove each pillowy heap away
And bade the earth stand firm for aye.

Had my visit to Notre-Dame been paid, say, thirty years before, I should most

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probably have heard for the Office this afternoon, "O quam juvat fratres Deus," familiarised to us as "O Lord, how joyful 'tis to see," by the compilers of "Hymns Ancient and Modern," who, when they entered upon their labours during the latter "fifties," laid the Paris Breviary, rather than those of Sarum, York, and Hereford, under contribution to a considerable extent.

The Gallican Church was always in a great degree independent of the see of Rome, and had its own separate Uses, or service books, differing considerably from the Roman ones, and not derived from them but from an independent source common to both, the tradition of the early church of the apostles. Nearly half a century ago the Roman Church succeeded in depriving the Gallican Church of this privilege, both ritually and liturgically, but the change was not effected without much opposition, many dioceses clinging with the greatest affection to their venerable Uses and insisting on the retention of a certain amount of *proprium sanctorum*.

Now I was very anxious to get a peep at a Paris breviary—chiefly for the sake of the originals of several of those hymns which have through ages been, and still continue to be, to countless souls the joy and consolation of their earthly pilgrimage.

At the close of Compline, therefore, I presented myself to M. Serre, the *maître du chœur*, and stated my desire, with the result that he most politely ushered me into the sacristy, and not only placed before me the four plump, but now, alas! disused little volumes, but also the necessary implements for making such memoranda upon their contents as I might think fit.

So down I sat, and for upwards of an hour busied myself in transferring to paper the first verses—time allowed me to do no more—of the originals of such favourites in the services of the Church of England as "Morn of morns and Day of days" ("Die dierum princeps," for use at Nocturns on Sunday); "As now the sun's declining rays" ("Labente jam solis rota," for Sunday at Nones); "New wonders of Thy mighty hand" ("Miramur o Deus tuæ," for Nocturns on Wednesday); "The Advent of our King" ("Instantis adventum Dei," for Ferias at Nocturns in Advent); "God from on high hath heard" ("Jam desinant suspiria," for Nocturns on Christmas Day); "Conquering kings their titles take" ("Victis sibi cognomina," for the first Vespers of the Circumcision); "What star is this, with beams so bright?" ("Quæ stella sole pulchrior?" for the First Vespers of the Epiphany); "Once more the solemn season calls" ("Solemne nos jejunii," for Lauds on Ash Wednesday); "The Shepherd now was smitten" ("Pastore percusso nimas," for the First Vespers of the Conversion of St. Paul); "Behold the messengers of Christ" ("Christe perennes nuntii," for the First Vespers of St. Mark); "Lo! from the desert homes" ("Nunc suis tandem novus

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e latebris," a Sapphic for Lauds on St. John Baptist's Day); "Christ in highest heaven enthroned; ("Christe qui sedes olympos," for the First Vespers of St. Michael and All Angels); "Captains of a saintly band" ("Cœlestis aulae principes," for Lauds on Festivals of Apostles); and "Disposer Supreme" ("Supreme qualis arbiter," for Nocturns on St. Matthias's Day and for the Common of Apostles).¹

I also embraced the opportunity of jotting down two stanzas from a prose in Sapphics for the festival of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, formerly observed on July 31, which, as they may interest my liturgical readers, I have pleasure in appending. Germanus of Auxerre, it will be remembered, was the Saint who, with Lupus of Troyes, rid Britain early in the fifth century of the Pelagian heresy:—

Ut Lupo Praesul comitante triste
Attigit terras, ululans fugatur
Error; attrito caput hoste victrix
Gratia tollit.

Interim Pictæ, fera gens, opimis
Horriram stragem minitantur agris:
Ne tamen vano trépides timore
Anglica tellus.

¹ Since writing the above, the kindness of my friend, the Rev. A. E. Alston, rector of Framingham Earl, Norfolk—so widely known by his assiduous and careful researches into the history and architecture of the Gallican Church—has enabled me to make a more leisurely acquaintance with these fine contributions to Catholic hymnology.

CHAPTER IX

MEAUX

SHORTLY before six the train from Paris deposits me on the platform of the imposing station at Meaux, which, with the houses clustering up around its commandingly-situated but not vast cathedral, has been visible for some time ere the thirty-mile ride through a large district of timber growth comes to an end.

There is no omnibus in waiting, but a dapper youth is in readiness to conduct me to a hostel, which at the time of my visit, perhaps ten years ago, was one of those thoroughly old-fashioned French houses Albert Smith was so fond of describing, with tiled and sanded floors to its *salle à manger*, and queer windows whose opening and closing were feats not to be attempted by nervous minds. Probably ere this, "on a changé tout cela."

Preliminaries arranged with Madame in her bureau, I ascend to the upper regions, where sundry doors are flung open. "Would Monsieur like a room with a northern or southern aspect?" There being no acacia-shaded courtyard here, Monsieur decides in favour of the latter, since from his window he is able to obtain a view of the west front of the cathedral, now bathed in the crimson glow of a fine sunset, and from whose tower the deep, hollow note of the bell, tolling the six o'clock "Ave Maria," smites upon the ear.

Presently another bell, with a less sonorous but by no means unwelcome voice, announces the hour of dinner, and I repair to the *salle à manger*, fully prepared after my long morning's work in Paris to do justice to the repast, which turns out to be an admirable one.

As some veal cutlets make the circuit of the table, I lose myself in speculating as to whether this can be the hostel patronised by that amiable bibliophile, Dr. Thomas Frognall Dibdin, during his visit to Meaux on a hot day in the summer of 1818, when collecting materials for that fascinating "Bibliographical,

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Antiquarian, and Picturesque Tour,"¹ in which occurs the following account of his experiences in this quiet and comparatively little known old cathedral city.

"At Meaux we dined, and have reason to remember the extravagant charges of the woman who kept the inn. The heat of the day was now becoming rather intense. While our veal cutlet was preparing we visited the church. It is a large cathedral-like church without transepts." (O, Dr. Dibdin, where were your eyes on this occasion?) "Only one tower in the west front is built—with the evident intention of raising another in the same aspect. They were repairing the west front, which is somewhat elaborately ornamented, but so intensely hot was the sun on our coming out to examine it that we were obliged to retreat into the interior, which seemed to contain the atmosphere of a different climate. A tall, well-dressed priest, in company with a middle-aged lady, were ascending the front steps to attend Divine service. Hot as it was, the priest saluted us and stood two minutes without his black cap, with the piercing rays of the sun upon his bald head. The bell tolled softly, and there was a quiet calm about the whole which almost invited us to postpone our attack upon the dinner we had ordered.

"Ten francs for a miserable cutlet and a yet more wretchedly-prepared fricandeau, with half-boiled artichokes and a bottle of undrinkable vin ordinaire, was a charge sufficiently monstrous to have excited the well-known warmth of expostulation of an English traveller; but it was really too hot to talk aloud. The landlady pocketed my money, and I pocketed the affront which so shameful a charge may be considered as having been put upon me."

During this journey the doctor's health was not as could be wished: sleep

¹ This book, published in the spring of 1821, was the result of nine months' incessant research into public and private libraries on the Continent. Dr. Dibdin had been attended on this journey by Mr. George Lewis, as an artist from whose pencil the most beautiful plates were derived, and who afterwards published, on his own account, a supplemental series of etchings, the money paid to engravers nearly approaching £5,000. Dr. Dibdin was probably justified when he boasted in his *Reminiscences* that this was "the most costly work on the score of embellishment, and the most perilous on that of responsibility, in which a traveller—relying upon his own resources exclusively—was ever engaged." There was a second edition, in three smaller volumes, without the embellishments of the former, but with a few new ones of its own, published in 1829. Dr. Dibdin, who was a nephew of the celebrated song-writer, Charles Dibdin, found a liberal patron in Earl Spencer, through whose powerful interest he became, in 1824, rector of St. Mary, Wyndham Place, then just completed from the designs of Sir Robert Smirke. To this church, which he served till his death in 1848, Dr. Dibdin presented a painted window representing the Ascension, unfortunately removed during the late Sir Arthur Blomfield's alterations in the interior about thirty years ago. Besides the *Bibliographical Tour*, the most important works from Dr. Dibdin's ever-busy pen were *Bibliomania*, which may be considered to have established the author's reputation in his peculiar branch of research; *The Typographical Antiquities of Great Britain*, unfortunately never completed; *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*, the *Bibliographical Decameron*, *Ædes Althorpiana*, and *Reminiscences of a Literary Life*, perhaps the most amusing of all his productions, but, like his former works, abounding in minor errors, the consequence of haste, and especially in the misspelling and mistaking of names, in which he was always a delinquent.



THE WEST FRONT, MEAUX

fled his pillow ; the chylopoietic regions were out of order ; an everlasting night-mare sate upon his pillow ; something was wrong about the mesentery ; a perpetual phantasy possessed him that he might find a copy of Dugdale's "Monasticon Anglicanum," especially at the monasteries of Molk, St. Florian, Chremsminster, Gothwic, and above all, at Kloster-Neuberg, upon large paper—vain bewitchery ! He pined and pined away, and when he returned to Paris he was scarcely recognised by his friends. A certain M. Crepelet gives the following account of him:—

"M. Dibdin, dans son voyage en France, a visité nos départements de l'ouest, et de l'est, toutes leurs principales villes jusqu' à tous les lieux remarquables par les beautés du site ou par les souvenirs historiques. Il a visité les châteaux, les églises, les chapelles ; il a observé nos mœurs, nos coutumes, nos habitudes. Il a examiné nos musées, et nos premiers cabinets de curiosité. Il s'est concentré dans nos Bibliothèques. Il parle de notre littérature et des hommes de lettres, des arts et de nos artistes. Il critique les personnes comme les choses. Il loue quelquefois, il plaisante souvent, la vivacité de son esprit l'égare presque toujours."

Towards the end of July the days shorten visibly, so that by the time dinner is concluded the shades of eve are falling fast.

Truly awful does the interior of the short but lofty cathedral look, with its double aisles and noble sweep of columns in the apse, the red light burning before the Presence, and a cluster or two of candles around some favourite image only serving to intensify the surrounding gloom. Involuntarily I recall that passage from Congreve's "Mourning Bride," so highly extolled by Dr. Johnson:—

How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
To bear aloft its arched and ponderous roof,
By its own weight made steadfast and immovable,
Looking tranquillity.

But my reverie is somewhat rudely disturbed by the sacristan vociferating "On ferme l'église !"

Candles are blown out with pantomimic suddenness, and a score or so of old dames whom the prevailing obscurity has hitherto concealed from observation bring their devotions to an abrupt conclusion, and make for the doors with a rustling noise comparable only to that of leaves before an autumnal wind.

The cathedral of Meaux—perhaps not so widely known as it deserves to be—might take a place among the first in France had it a nave commensurate in dignity with the choir, a *chef d'œuvre* of the latter part of the thirteenth century, and which, in some respects, I am bold enough to prefer to its parent at Amiens.

The present building enshrines portions of a church of the twelfth century,

THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

which was described in the chapter records of 1268 as a beautifully constructed one, grand and wonderful—

Quoniam tam decora, tam nobilis structura nostræ Meldensis ecclesiæ.

About the middle of the thirteenth century this church, of which remains are still visible in the lower tier of arcades on either side of the choir and in the nave adjacent to the transepts, threatened ruin, whereupon the Bishop, Jean de Poincy, determined to rebuild it on a scale of increased magnificence. Accordingly, at a meeting of the Chapter held in 1268, it was resolved that, besides the offerings of the faithful, one year's income of all the benefices in the diocese that became vacant within ten years should be applied to the fund. This gigantic undertaking, entered upon with such enthusiasm, made but slow progress. Fortunately the choir, with its beautiful corona of chapels, was completed before the middle of the fourteenth century, while the French style was at its height. But the remainder of the work, owing probably to the unsettled state of the country during the English wars, languished, the construction of the transepts with their portals, and the lower part of the western façade, being spread over the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, while the nave and solitary north-western tower were not finished until 1530.

The shortness of its nave, one of the few in France planned with double aisles, is the great drawback to the cathedral at Meaux. It is only of five bays, and as the two westernmost are absorbed in the towers it presents a somewhat truncated appearance externally. The piers, from which the arches separating the nave from its aisles spring, are formed of gigantic clusters of slender shafts with capitals chiselled into wreaths of vine and holly—a naturalistic type of foliated ornament that betokens the gradually declining Gothic of France. Several of the pillars separating the double aisles, whose effect, owing to the extreme shortness of the nave is but imperfectly realised, are tall cylinders with carved capitals, and recall those in the same position in the minster at Ulm. At the time of my visit extensive works of reparation and renovation were in progress; the whole of the south side had been mercilessly flayed, and the debased Gothic tracery in the windows of the nave chapels was being transmuted into Geometrical Decorated. Unfortunately, the French have been taught to look to the Government as the owner and restorer of all religious buildings, and they do not concern themselves about either the security of the fabrics or, except in a few instances, the character of their fittings and decorations.

Thankful should we be that the State is not so careful for us as it is in France, for then we should see here, just as we do there, a people careless of the noble buildings which surround them, in place of—as we do here—a people



THE SOUTH TRANSEPT, MEAUX

MEAUX

whose love for these old monuments is enhanced by the fact that they are themselves constantly invited to aid in their restoration and repair.

The two westernmost bays of the nave forming the bases of the towers are very narrow, and the arches extremely acute, but the spaces enclosed by them are nobly vaulted. Part of the triforium in the nave is Middle Pointed, of good character, and two clerestory windows on the north side are unquestionably First Pointed. In the transepts the workmanship, as may be gathered from the accompanying illustration, is uncommonly grand. The shallow arcading on either side the entrance is of rare excellence, and the windows, to which additional beauty is imparted by an inner plane of tracery, are set off by modern stained glass representing small figures of saints, wherein the positive tinctures are used so sparingly that they seem to flash forth like jewels from the sea of grisaille in which they are set.

But if the richness of the transepts at Meaux calls forth our admiration, we stand spellbound before the apse, which, with its colossal round columns, each strengthened by a slender shaft which shoots up from the floor of the sanctuary to the spring of the vaulting ribs, *d'un seul jet*, is invested with a combined boldness and lightness only equalled by its great prototype at Amiens, stained glass in the two-light windows of the clerestory being alone required to perfect the *ensemble*. To an exacting critic the clerestory windows in the apse at Meaux may seem hardly lofty enough, a defect which the piercing of the triforium, as at Nevers, Tours, Troyes, and elsewhere, would remedy to some extent. In the three-bayed choir proper the two tiers of arches are a remarkable feature. The lower one, a remnant of the twelfth-century church, has short compound piers, and, there can be little doubt, supported one of those grandly developed tribunes to which I have frequently alluded as constituting so marked a feature of Early North-Eastern French Gothic. The easternmost respond of one of these arcades is still discernible in the nave, against the last pier on the north side, from which one would conclude that these vaulted galleries extended throughout the church, which in its twelfth-century state must have resembled Laon, Noyon, and Senlis.

When the reconstruction of the choir was resolved upon after the middle of the thirteenth century, the use of the "tribune" had gone out of fashion and been replaced by the lofty unbroken arcade. However, the architect retained the arches which opened into the much lower aisles of the old building, and also those of the tribunes so as to be commensurate in height with those in the apse, which he rebuilt *de novo*. By subdividing these upper arches, for purposes of stability, into two trefoil-headed compartments, surmounted by a large sexfoiled circle, he produced a piece of work as useful

THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

as it was graceful and novel. In this part of the church the arches of the triforium are slightly triangular, and the clerestory windows are each of four lights with trefoils in the subarcuations and a sexfoiled circle in the head.

Noble piers, composed of a cylinder around which four slender shafts cluster, separate the two aisles that run round the choir. Here is a series of most graceful chapels with elongated windows of two lights each, in some of which a commencement of very creditable painted glass has been made. It is a pity, however, that the subjects filling the windows in the Lady Chapel are allowed to spread themselves through both lights, instead of being confined to one in the mediæval manner prevalent when this part of the church was built.

While making some researches in the choir-stalls my hand lights upon four subfusc-hued volumes, which upon inspection turn out to be a Meaux Breviary of the eighteenth century.

Opening the *Pars Hiemalis* at random, the first thing to catch the eye is the hymn "*Lapsus est annus, redit annus alter*" for the Office of Compline after the First Vespers of the Circumcision. On reading it through I find it to be the original of one set in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* for New Year's Day—"The year is gone beyond recall"—where the translation, like that of many others in the same collection, is due to Rev. Francis Pott. Compline would, of course, be the last Office said on December 31st, and there is a rubric in the Meaux Breviary—occurring also in that of Poitiers, from which this hymn in all probability originated—stating that at the fifth stanza all are to kneel.

While on this subject I might mention that in looking through the Paris Breviary I was disappointed at not finding "*Sol præseps rapitur, proxima nox adest*"—the original of "*The sun is sinking fast*"—so turned to the index in the Meaux edition hoping to find it there, but I failed to discover it. Indeed, I might have saved myself the trouble of looking, for upon my return home I consulted the best works on hymnology, all of which agreed in saying that every effort had been made to trace this hymn to its original source, but in vain.

Many hymns in these French diocesan breviaries, made known to us by such translators as Bishop Mant, Isaac Williams, and John Chandler, are of no great antiquity, not a few dating only from the eighteenth century—the Paris book having been revised in 1736 by Archbishop Charles de Mintiville—but as specimens of *latinity* they doubtless surpass the mediæval ones, while as earnest and devotional compositions they are little inferior.

The bell beginning to toll, I restore these absorbing volumes to their parent shelf; not a minute too soon, however, for the canons are already making their way towards the choir, into which they pass severally, and not as with us, processionally, for the morning offices.

MEAUX

As nine o'clock strikes they rise in their stalls for the service of Terce, the effect of this daily punctual waiting upon God being very impressive. Many of my readers will doubtless have observed the same excellent quality at Westminster Abbey.

At the conclusion of the Offices, all of which are recited in monotone and without accompaniment of any kind, I revisit the choir aisles, and while contemplating the not very satisfactory counterfeit presentment of "The greatest doctor that the Church of Rome has produced since the schism of the sixteenth century,"¹ the statue in the south aisle of Bossuet the Bishop and "Eagle of Meaux," I am invited by the sacristan to ascend the western tower.

It is a long and weary climb, but the view from the leads amply repays the toil, embracing, as it does, a glorious tract of champagne country, watered by the Marne, winding and glittering through it, while below lies the picturesque old cathedral city, and the episcopal palace, with its gardens and that avenue of yews where Bossuet loved to meditate.

Here it was that the Royal Family of France spent one miserable night—that of June 24, 1791, on their return as prisoners of state from Varennes to Paris. All the way from Châlons the royal captives had pursued their journey amidst a torrent of abuse, which increased in ferocity along the thirty miles between Meaux and the capital.

As the heavy berlin, where ten persons² were squeezed together, passed through Paris to the Tuileries in the evening of the 25th, "volumes of dust raised by the trampling of two or three hundred thousand spectators was the only veil which from time to time covered the humiliation of the King and Queen from the triumph of the people. . . . The travellers panted for breath, the foreheads of the two children were bathed in perspiration. The Queen, trembling for them, let down one of the windows of the carriage quickly, and addressing the crowd in an appeal to their compassion—"See, gentlemen," she exclaimed, "in what a state my poor children are—one is choking!" "We will choke you in another fashion" replied these merciless ruffians, who, looking in silence on the King, Queen, and Dauphin, seemed calculating on final crimes and feeding on the degradation of royalty."³ And so by the turning bridge the carriages entered the garden of that palace, which until he quitted it but a year

¹ Macaulay's History of England.

² They included the King, the Queen, the two royal children, their aunt Madame Elizabeth, and their governess the Marquise de Tourzel; two waiting women of the queen; Barnave and the brutal Petion, two commissioners of the Assembly who had been despatched to meet the royal party at Eprenay and conduct them back to the capital.

³ Lamartine "Histoire des Girondists."

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later for the gloomy Temple, was to be the gilded cage of a monarch who, one of the most upright and best intentioned that ever sat upon the throne of France, had the misfortune to live when he did and to suffer for the unenlightened despotism of the one, and the unprincipled and feeble mind of the other, of his immediate predecessors.

Traversing as I do, almost the very same route as that taken by the hapless monarch, it is impossible to avoid these reflections during the return journey from Meaux to Paris, where I arrive in time for afternoon "Salut" at the Madeleine.



THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH-EAST, LE MANS

CHAPTER X

LE MANS

A TWO days' sojourn in the birthplace of our Henry II afforded ample opportunities of viewing the choir of its cathedral—the work as of angel architects—under every condition. Never did it look lovelier than about half-past seven on the first evening of my visit, when the setting sun was dyeing the choir piers,

“whose light shafts
Cluster like stems in corn sheaves,”

with gorgeous colours from the old stained glass, which rivals that of Chartres in brilliancy if not in profusion. Modern improvement has robbed Le Mans of much of the charm it possessed for people of an artistic temperament. Indeed, the whole city between the railway station and the cathedral is as jejune as the Rue Jeanne d'Arc at Rouen, and what picturesque bits have escaped the clutches of the improver are fast disappearing or are already doomed. The whole side of one street—the Rue Gambetta—and those debouching from it leading down from the river Sarthe to the Place de la République, had been removed at the time of my visit, and the eye rested upon a wilderness of rubbish, dreary in the extreme. Doubtless the removal of these old tortuous streets is to be rejoiced at from a sanitary point of view, but the best part of the city is, at the present writing, a symbol merely of the last quarter of a century. The backs and gables of the houses in the old quarters, and the odours around them, remind one not a little of the most densely peopled by-streets and lanes of Chatham; while slate, brought in large quantities from Angers, fifty miles off, having been largely used in the construction of the houses, a dusky tint is imparted to these old and curious faubourgs of Le Mans, through which the Sarthe sluggishly pursues its course. Farther down, the river is most picturesque, admirably suited to boating, bathing, and other aquatic pleasures, while the scenery bordering it is a replica of that so well known to lovers of “Our River”—fields, polled willows, poplars, quickset hedges, mills, and so forth, forcibly asserting the characteristic of British pasturage, accentuated by the briar-grown winding lane and the thatched cottage so dear to English minds.

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But the whole of the old part of Le Mans is not unsavoury. That in the immediate vicinity of the cathedral is certainly clean and sweet ; while from the summit of the steep declivity, through which a tunnel has been cut, or from the top of the flights of steps winding round the old walls with their remains of bastions, superb views of the surrounding country can be obtained. Few French cathedrals are more majestically situated than Le Mans. It is built almost north and south, but for the purposes of description I will assume that it orientates properly. It stands upon a species of plateau rising very abruptly on the riverside, but more gradually on the opposite one as approached from the railway station and the busy part of the city ; in fact, there is a gentle rise in the ground from the station to the cathedral.

Seen for the first time, the external outline of Le Mans Cathedral is not a little perplexing, owing to the situation of its tower, which, planted against the face of the southern arm, gives one the idea that it consists only of a very short nave and extravagantly grand aspidal transept. But behind this is the nave. Of ten bays, long, low, and invisible from the east, it is Romanesque, but quite unlike that of the contiguous province of Normandy, being much more Southern in character.

To this nave, early in the thirteenth century, and shortly after the union of the province of Maine with the royal demesne, was added the present marvellous five-aisled choir, with its eleven chapels, which open not only from the procession path but from the sides of the choir. Being of much greater depth than the generality of chapels in French cathedrals, those at Le Mans impart a peculiarly *rayonnant* effect to the ground plan, and they are so arranged as to leave space for the introduction—with admirable effect—of a window between each. The transepts and south tower are somewhat later than the choir, not being completed till the fourteenth century. No contrast can be greater than that between the long, low Romanesque nave, with its simple round-headed windows in aisles, clerestory, and west front, and the soaring Decorated transepts and choir. Many features of interest are presented by this nave, severe though it be. Into the shafts and voussoirs of the large Romanesque window, lighting the western façade, which in some respects recalls that of Angers, some graceful, natural colour is introduced by bands of brown stone. Very noble is the central door in this grandly simple façade, which, with the outer walls of the aisles and the lower part of the north transept and tower, are the only existing portions of the eleventh-century building. The upper portions of the nave were rebuilt in the twelfth century, the dome-like vaulting recalling that of some of the great Early Pointed churches of the South. A gem in this severe setting is the southern portal, rivalling in richness the Porte Royale of Chartres Cathedral, the north and



THE WEST FRONT OF THE CATHEDRAL, LE MANS

LE MANS

south doors of Bourges, and one in St. Benigne at Dijon, with all of which it is contemporary (c. 1150).

The tower which, as I have said, adjoins the south arm, giving the air of a very short nave, is Romanesque in its lower part, and was kept when the Middle Pointed architect removed the original transept. In its upper part the tower is Later Decorated, and built of a richly-coloured granite. Terminating square with an iron tourelle at each corner, a larger tourelle, also of iron, surmounting a dome in the centre, it recalls in general effect some of the rich Late Pointed towers of the adjacent province of Brittany. One feature in the exterior of Le Mans Cathedral is very striking, viz., the large Decorated window lighting the wall-space above the arch opening from the low nave into the transepts, somewhat after the fashion of that at Gloucester Cathedral, and that eastern nave window one may see in many a Third Pointed church that is the pride and glory of Western England, though of course at Le Mans its position is reversed.

The exterior of the sacristy—a typical piece of French thirteenth-century work—has recently undergone restoration, and, as well as the chapels surrounding and flanking the choir, abuts upon the terraced gardens of the bishop's palace.

Let us enter—as everyone should enter this loveliest of French choirs—by a small door between two of the radiating chapels on the north, at the top of a long flight of steps. Oh for a mastery of vivid thought, for a wealth of picturing words, that an adequate idea might be given of the greatness and magnificence of this wondrous choir, where the most enthusiastic admirer of the beautiful must pause in sober certainty of having reached perfection! How can I adequately make mention—even in declaring its grandeur, a grandeur affording a striking contrast to the contemporary but more rugged one of Chartres, to be unimaginable—of this choir of Le Mans? A marvellous sight to behold, it is indeed; more like the præternatural shapes we gaze upon in dreams—embodying in its gigantic proportions the most expressively graceful *motif*, and withal the most minute and carefully finished details—than the sober realities emanating from the skill and handicraft of living men!

After having viewed all those thirteenth-century cathedrals entitled to a place in the first class—Amiens, Chartres, Paris, Rheims, and Rouen—I may confidently affirm that I am at a loss to particularise any one the choir of which has, for beauty and solemnity, so indelibly impressed its features on the memory as a *chef d'œuvre* in design and execution as that of Le Mans. This ought to arouse curiosity; but how many of the countless English visitors to Brittany ever think of returning to England through Paris by way of the old capital of Maine? Let me proceed to put ever so faintly the details of this wonderful conception before the mind's eye of my readers.

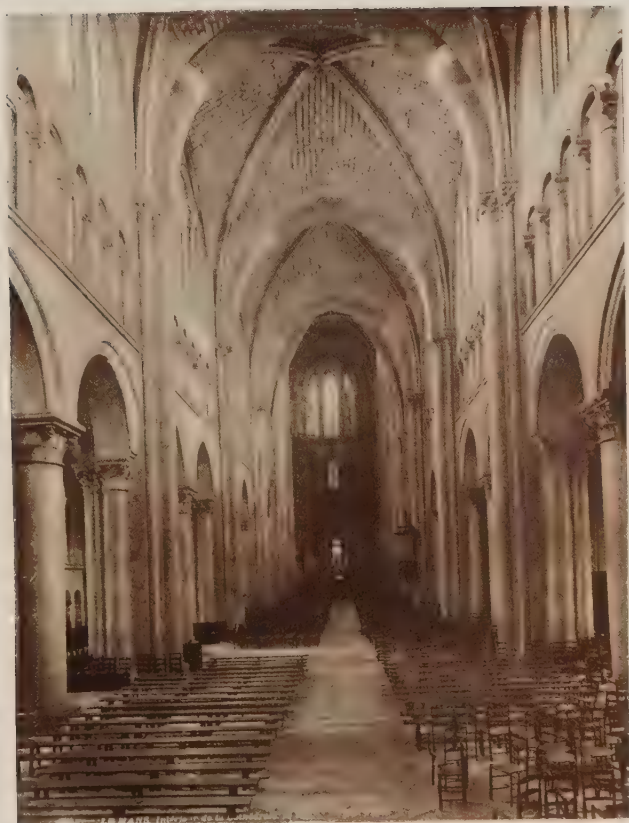
THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

Stationing himself beneath the eastern arch of the nave, the spectator has on his left the luminous northern transept, with its vast east and west windows and glorious north rose, little inferior as regards its stonework to those in Rouen, Troyes, and Amiens Cathedrals, and showing few, if any, evidences of a declining age. What taste is evinced by the architect in every line and curve of this rose! What consummate skill and mathematical knowledge must have been brought to bear upon the delicate and almost unique *fleur-de-lis* tracery¹ of the row of windows below it!

Turning to the right the south transept will be seen to contain a gigantic organ in its Renaissance case with five towers. In front of it is the choir organ. Curious old figures in domed niches adorn the gallery front. The great steeple's abutments preclude a rose here, but floods of light are poured in through the immense east and west windows of this transept. Grandly traceried and of eight lights apiece, they must be among the largest in France. In front are five arches. The centre one, 104 feet high, opens into the matchless choir; right and left is a narrower one, of the same height as the choir arcades, and opening into the first aisle. This is furnished with its own arcade, triforium, and clerestory. Another arch, much lower than the other, admits to the outer choir aisle, opening in its turn to the chapels. To square piers are attached slender reed-like shafts with exquisitely foliated capitals, from which spring the moulded arches—perfect specimens of Early Pointed work—of the three bays forming the choir proper. In the apse the architect has given us coupled cylindrical pillars with a slender shaft fixed in where the two join, for stability of effect. Although very tall, the height of these arcades is not exaggerated like those at Beauvais—all charms but does not overwhelm. The triforium, usually round the choir, is in this cathedral, as at Coutances and Bourges, transferred to the first aisle, an arcade of trefoils running below the clerestory here taking its place. The painted glass filling the clerestory windows, some of which are of two-lights, others of four and even six, is truly magnificent.

If we turn to the inner aisle, we shall see that nothing was spared which could add to the embellishment or excellence of the work, so long as it continued, making one regret that the chapter were compelled to relinquish what was no doubt their original intention—the reconstruction of the nave on a scale of similar magnificence. This is separated from the outer one by a continuous range of richly moulded arches on cylindrical pillars, really of large proportions, but dwarfed by the huge dimensions of those in the choir proper. Above this arcade is a triforium equally noble in its conception, where the delicacy and

¹ The *fleur-de-lis* occurs in the tracery of the aisles of Troyes Cathedral.



THE NAVE LOOKING EAST, LE MANS

LE MANS

refinement evinced in the carving of the shafts, capitals, and tympana bring to mind Lincoln, Beverley, Westminster, and York. For clerestory we see here varying numbers of uncusped lancets, diminishing in height with the slope of the arch containing them and glowing with old glass.

Opening from the outer aisle are the eleven apsidal chapels in the Lancet style of the thirteenth century, and therefore the earliest portion of the grandly rebuilt choir. The longest of these is the Lady Chapel, carefully restored five-and-thirty years ago, when very extensive mural paintings once more saw the light. The sides of this chapel are lighted by three windows of two uncusped lights each, with a quatrefoiled circlet in the head; the apse has five lancets. Here again the old glass rivets attention; indeed, the violet hues of its gloriously painted quarries are only surpassed by those in the Sainte-Chapelle at Paris.

The other ten radiating chapels, although much deeper than those ordinarily met with round the choirs of France, are not so long as the Lady Chapel. Each is apsidal with three lancets, and has a triple dedication. One, however, on the south side—that of St. Gervais, St. Etienne, and St. Protais—has its lancets filled with Middle Pointed tracery and modern stained glass to match.

The figures, placed under conventional canopies of a type employed by Messrs. Clayton and Bell in their earlier works, such as the windows in the apses of St. Mary's, Stoke Newington, Exeter College Chapel, and elsewhere, are of unusually good and bright tinctures. A very grandiose portal in the richest and most voluptuous Italian Renaissance protects the chapel of the Sacred Heart, wherein, above the altar, floats a banner with the legend, "Cœur de Jésus, sauve France!" A portal of similar character, which formed part of the seventeenth-century *jubilé*, admits to the sacristy—a noble apartment thrown out from the third chapel in the south aisle, and around whose central vaulting pillar several processional crucifixes are disposed in sockets. Here are fine wain-scotting and massively framed portraits of bishops and canons of Le Mans. The brazier for the incense stands down on the floor, and upon the tables the Eucharistic vestments of the colour proper for the day lie spread in readiness for the chapter Mass, which is performed here daily with much ritual and musical dignity, the chasuble, dalmatic, and tunicle worn by the officiants on one morning of my stay being of a delicate rose colour.

A very interesting church at Le Mans is that of St. Julien des Prés, situated on the opposite bank of the Sarthe, and only conspicuous by a small modern Romanesque western steeple, of so uninteresting a character that I walked nonchalantly towards it, expecting to find the rest of the structure equally dull or void of interest. It was, however, pleasant to find a cruciform apsidally

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terminated church of fine proportions, with a noble arcade of isolated Romanesque columns and round arches, quite reminding one of Durham's "rocky solidity and indeterminate duration." The chancel is Pointed, and has a series of narrow stilted arches in its apse. All the eastern part of the building has received mural decoration, some frescoes above the bays in the triforium space illustrating the life of St. Julien being particularly telling. The situation of the altar in this church, beneath the eastern arch of the crossing at the top of a flight of steps, rendered necessary by the crypt beneath the eastern limb, imparts much dignity and interest to the interior. Behind the altar are arranged the choir stalls, as at Notre-Dame de la Couture, to be described hereafter, and above it is a suspended crucifix, one of the very few I remember to have met with in France. Figures of the Blessed Virgin and the Magdalene are seen regarding the rood from slender pillars, one on either side the sanctuary. The high altar, in very good Byzantine taste, has a tall central cross of the same style, and two blue vases of artificial flowers on a ledge in advance of the six flanking candles. Altogether this church wears a refreshingly mediæval aspect, recalling very strongly that of the Rhenish Romanesque St. Cunibert's or St. Martin's at Cologne. But what one misses very much here, as everywhere in France, are rich hangings and an altar frontal. It is the presence of such needlework that gives our Anglican sanctuaries so rich an appearance. This church, however, is evidently in the hands of a curé who takes great interest in its history and architecture, a printed history from his pen affixed to the nave piers at the west end above the *bénitiers* concluding with the following note :—"Il est défendu d'entrer dans l'église avec des chiens, avec des paniers, des pots à lait, ou avec tout autre objet qui indiquerait un manque de respect pour la Maison de Dieu."

Luncheon concluded, I bethink myself of repairing to the cathedral to hear the afternoon Offices, and shortly before two start off ; but after sitting in the nave for more than half an hour, and not a singing man or canon putting in an appearance, quit the church for a country ramble among the English-looking lanes bordering the river. Evidently the postprandial Offices are not sung at Le Mans.

Leaving the outskirts of the city I am overtaken by a funeral procession on its way to the cemetery. So intense is the afternoon heat that the tapers carried by the little acolytes on either side the silver crucifix are describing elongated semicircles, while the long train of followers, mostly women under umbrellas, are "lagging, tired with the length of the way," like the two hundred ladies at Anne of Denmark's funeral, "a drawling dolorous sight."

Without any definite object in view, I ramble on until some picturesque mills—the Bishop's Mills, situated on the Sarthe, and approached from the road

LE MANS

by a wooden bridge, on which stands a prepossessing café—present themselves. Keeping this house of entertainment in my mind's eye, I cross the bridge and continue to ramble along the road bordering the opposite bank of the Sarthe, whose verdant meadows fringed with polled willows invite repose. Another short walk and the small village church of St. Pavage is reached. A mere barn, like some of the little old Welsh chapels, it is striking from the contrast it offers to the soaring choir of the cathedral, plainly seen athwart the trees from the peaceful little "God's acre" where I rest awhile. The return walk to Le Mans is agreeably broken by a bath and a brisk walk back to the rustic-balconied café, whence the view looking up the river terminates in the long, low, Romanesque nave and lofty choir of St. Julien. The situation is really so enchanting that I bespeak a *déjeuner à la fourchette* for the next morning, intending to bring books and writing materials. To be sure I had meant to quit Le Mans at an early hour for Tours, but as I have no one but myself to consult, am able somewhat to adopt Montaigne's method of proceeding:—"S'il fait laid à droite, je prends à gauche; si je me trouve mal propre à monter à cheval, je m'arreste. . . Ay-je laissé quelque chose derrière moi, j'y retourne: c'est toujours mon chemin, je ne trace aucune ligne certaine, n'y droite n'y courbe."

The first item in the programme of the second day at Le Mans is a visit to the singular church of Notre-Dame de la Couture, *i.e.* de cultura Dei. In the stillness of early morning several Low Masses are being celebrated here. A very largely attended one is going on in the chapel opening out of the south transept. In the one opposite an old woman constitutes the congregation. The chasubles worn are black and of board-like appearance, presumably for *Messes des Morts*. At the subsequent Canons' Mass at the cathedral the celebrant and his assistants are vested in violet for the Vigil of St. Lawrence.

Although it has suffered grievously from injudicious restoration, Notre-Dame de la Couture presents many features of more than ordinary interest. We will take the interior—and the oldest part of the interior—first. This is the choir, which, like that of St. Julien des Prés, loses much of its real height from the presence of a crypt which runs under it in its central portion, and at the top of whose steps stands the high altar, just under the arch leading into the choir. The encircling arcades are very simple and severe, strongly recalling our St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield, and St John's Chapel in the White Tower. The true height of the plain round columns can only be seen from the choir aisles, whence, right and left, steps descend into this crypt, which receives partial light from some windows giving on to the choir aisles, it not being thoroughly subterranean. The Romanesque windows of the choir clerestory have been replaced by Decorated ones, filled with questionable stained glass—a great blemish on this

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otherwise perfect interior. The high altar at La Couture, standing, as I said at the summit of the crypt steps, and therefore attaining an air of unusual dignity and importance, is of modern Byzantine workmanship, and has in lieu of antependium a row of small figures within arcades. Behind the tall crucifix and candles, all carrying out the same design, is a low reredos with arcaded figures. In the space behind are the choir-stalls and organ.

The circumambient aisle chapels are, many of them, very beautiful, Singularly, the eastern chapel is square-ended. It is Early Decorated, and has an east window of four lights filled with good, bright, modern stained glass. The side windows are of two lights.

Perhaps the gem of this church is the chapel of the Sacred Heart in the north ambulatory, from which the most fascinating views are to be had across the choir and transepts. Here is a large Renaissance baldacchino of modern design. From the pendant bosses of its three arches hang lamps, three from the central and two from each side arch—seven in all. Another interesting feature is the presence of some red brickwork in the arches of this aisle, not profuse, but just sufficient to give a touch of colour here and there. The Romanesque transepts seem to have been much cut into during the Decorated periods, the face of the northern one being lighted by a very tall six-light window with wiry tracery, German or Flemish rather than French in its character, and a large Decorated chapel has been thrown out on its east side, containing a reredos—a perfect mountain of modern Italian frippery. The west side of the altar is worked in black and white marble, looking at a distance something like a frontal. The opposite transept and its chapel are poor late work.

To this apsidal choir and transepts a broad nave of the Angevine type succeeds. It is divided into three wide bays by clusters of attached shafts, from which the main ribs of the waggon-shaped and vaulted roof spring. There are no aisles, but the walls are relieved in their lower part by broad blank arches, above which is a clerestory of coupled lancets nobly shafted, and having in the containing arch a circle, in the western bay, cusped. A finer type of nave for congregational purposes can hardly be imagined, and it is interesting to find such an example so far north as Le Mans. Eastward the nave opens to the transepts by one tall narrow arch, with a very low one to right and left of it. Westward we have a low broad arch giving access to a species of upper narthex, through which the great Decorated window lighting the front between the towers is seen. These are of good solid Middle Pointed character, but, like so many other French steeples, unfinished. Square-topped, slate spires, like those at Gournay in the Pays du Bray, and other districts of Normandy, terminate these towers.



INTÉRIEUR DE LA CHAPELLE DE LA VIERGE

LE MANS

Externally the most valuable feature of Notre-Dame de la Couture is its western portal, extending the whole width of the nave, as at Sées, to which a finely moulded arch on delicate shafts admits. In the tympanum is the Last Judgment, the mouldings of its encircling arch being formed of three rows of figures representing the blessed. Six colossal figures of the four Evangelists with SS. Peter and Paul—three on either side—form the pillars supporting this arch, whose doors exhibit in small panels good Flamboyant wood-carving. Altogether, Notre-Dame de la Couture, to the architect, the ecclesiologist, and the ritualist is a most fascinating church, but one that requires several visits before it can be thoroughly understood and appreciated.

After assisting at the Chapter Mass in the choir of the cathedral, seated in the *pourtour*, from which thirty compartments of glorious old stained glass are visible at a glance, I take a boat down the Sarthe to the Bishop's Mills, where I linger until watch and gradually westering sun give warning that it is more than fully time to go back to Le Mans, if the 4.50 train for Tours is to be caught. So, while paying my modest reckoning, I express regrets to Madame that it is not possible to spend longer time in a place with which I am so charmed, return to the boat, and find myself after a most delightful pull of about twenty minutes at the foot of the steps leading up from the river to St. Julien. There is just time to take one long lingering glance round the *élané* choir from the little door in the eastern ambulatory. Returning to the hotel, effects are got snugly under hatches, and about a quarter past four I have cleared out with cargo for Tours, which is reached after a very tedious railway journey, just as the gas-lights are beginning to dot its boulevards and the quais where a great fair is about to make day noisy and night radiant and merry for the next fortnight.

CHAPTER XI

TOURS

FEW cities in France could formerly boast so many and such interesting churches as the capital of the Touraine. It was in truth a city of churches and monasteries, which had gradually grown up around the sacred grotto dug by St. Gatien in the rocks of Marmoutier. Some of these had been unaccountably suffered to fall into decay at a period considerably anterior to the Revolution, but it was not until some years after that event that the destruction of the glorious abbey of St. Martin, the resort of countless pilgrims from every corner of Christendom, took place. Then it was that the church and other parts of the convent of Marmoutier which had escaped revolutionary fury were bought and razed to the ground by a private individual, who openly avowed his act as springing from a hatred of Christianity. Thus a shrine which by a hair's-breadth had escaped the lawless mob fell a victim to the hate and malice of one man, two noble steeples alone remaining as witnesses of its former magnificence. These towers, the dome of the great modern basilica reared on the site of the monastery, and the twin steeples of St. Gatien's Cathedral, while serving to break the dead, flat monotony of the city when viewed from the opposite bank of the Loire, by no means represent the ecclesiastical remains of Tours, which I am agreeably surprised to find so extensive; but none of the lesser parish churches have steeples of sufficient magnitude to impart to the city that air of grandeur presented by Rouen, Caen, or Dijon.

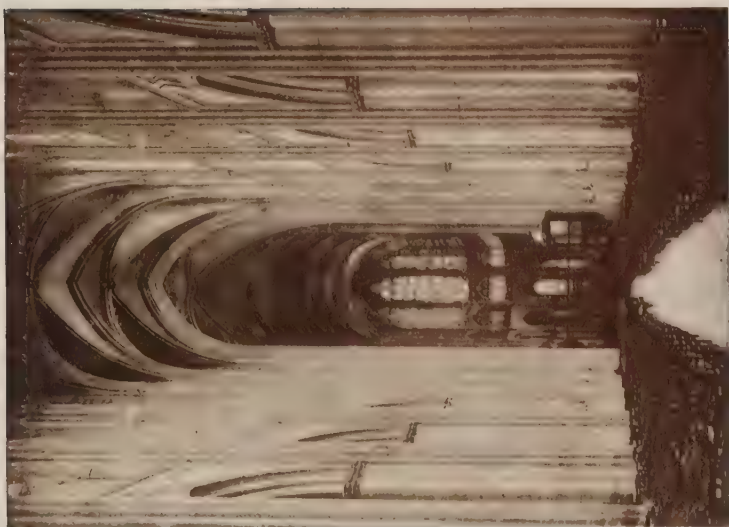
Repairing to the cathedral on the morning after my arrival, I find the Offices of Terce, Mass, and Sext about to commence, and readers, whether musical or ritualistic—I use the latter word in its true sense—will be interested to know that Tours is one of the few French cathedrals in which the daily Capitular Offices are performed with great ritual solemnity and musical accompaniment.

I enter by the door in the south transept, to find several little choristers in scarlet cassocks, and with the colours from the stained glass in the clerestory just glinting upon their surplices, flitting about the solemn old choir as they find the places in the music-books, while the great bell booms along the vaulted roof of

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TOURS

the nave. Two of these small individuals form a pretty picture as, in their zuchetto-covered flaxen curls, they confabulate together, music-books under arm, at the tall iron gate of the choir, with its surmounting archiepiscopal cross. Those about to take part in the Morning Offices begin to drop in to their appointed seats. A canon—the one, I presume, who is to sing the Mass—brings in the chalice with the paten and Host upon it, covered by the palla and the chalice veil, and on the veil the bursa containing the corporal. Placing these reverently upon the table of prothesis on the south of the sanctuary, he takes his place with the other canons *in choro* for Terce, which is then monotoned. Towards its conclusion, and while the six great candles upon the altar are being lighted, he retires to vest for the Mass. Upon his entrance in plum-coloured chasuble the choir sing the introit for St. Lawrence's Day, "*Confessio et pulchritudo in conspectu ejus ; sanctitas et magnificentia in sanctificatione ejus.*" Then follows the psalm, *Cantate Domino canticum novum*, to a very beautiful prolongation of the Fifth Tone. An ecclesiastic plays the organ, which behaves itself very well until the Offertorium, when, upon the performer essaying a very elaborate piece in honour of the occasion, it becomes intractable, causing the poor curé to get crimson of visage and to cast sundry agonised glances across the choir at the biretta'd canons. But these dignitaries seem quite unmoved, sitting in their stalls with closed eyes and folded hands, affecting to take no notice whatever of the matter. Not so sundry of the choir-boys, whose faces give tokens of risibility. The plain Song to the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, etc., is accompanied smoothly and well, the *Domine salvum fac* to the Tonus Regius and several very beautiful "Amens" bringing the Mass to a solemn and restful close.

The Morning Offices ended, I proceed to inspect more closely the architectural features of St. Gatien's, a church which has peculiar claims to the interest of Englishmen, having been commenced by our Henry II. Built almost immediately after the destruction (from incendiary causes, as usual) of the Romanesque cathedral—a structure apparently of very considerable extent—the radiating chapels and arcades of the choir are in the Earliest Pointed ; indeed, the windows of the former cannot be said to have quite emancipated themselves from Romanesque tradition.

Although inferior in size and importance to the vast northern cathedrals, Tours yields to none in solemnity of effect and delicacy of detail. At a first glance it appears, both externally and internally, commonplace (if such a term may be used), but a lengthy or repeated visit will serve to dispel this feeling, and the building will be found, after a careful survey, to enshrine everything that is elegant in detail and harmonious in proportion ; besides which it has the merit of being one of the few French cathedrals showing finish in all its parts

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and no traces of incomplete plan. The choir and its surroundings are the earliest portions, if we except some remains of Romanesque work in the bases of the towers. That the arcades of the choir at Tours lack that richness of foliated ornament common to Auxerre, Troyes, and Bayeux cannot be denied, yet, viewed from either transept, the Doric simplicity of its five acutely pointed arches on piers composed of a cylinder with four encircling shafts, all with boldly foliated capitals, is undeniably imposing. So are the narrow stilted arches of the apse. Next in point of date come the choir clerestory and triforium, the transepts and the first two bays, counting from the east, of the nave. These belong to the Middle Pointed period, which they admirably represent. Of especial beauty are the windows in the clerestory and triforium of the choir, presenting a perfect lantern of old stained glass—the glory of Tours and the subject of a monograph from the pen of the late Chanoine Bourassé,¹ who, associated in his ecclesiological studies with Chanoine Manceau, did much towards the improvement of the cathedral about 1846-48. Till nearly the middle of the fifteenth century, when the nave from the second bay east was commenced, no further progress seems to have been made at Tours, but the work once taken in hand was carried steadily on into the Flamboyant and Early Renaissance periods—the marvellous west front, with its twin towers crowned by small scaled domes, from which, unhappily, the “melancholy gold” has been scraped, completing the work. All the splendour which precedes decay characterises the style in which this western façade of Tours—by no means on the gigantic scale of Rouen or Troyes—is built.

A difficulty occurred in the construction of Tours Cathedral, which occasioned a somewhat unsightly irregularity in the north transept. It appears from an inspection of the plan of this church that its constructors, being anxious to lessen the width of the building from the commencement of the nave, found it requisite to deviate from the line of the choir piers by bringing the large transeptal columns at the north-east angle a few feet inwards. This had the effect of materially disarranging the vaulting of the westernmost end of the north aisle of the choir, making it necessary to construct the east wall of the transept at an acute angle, and to throw out an enormous flying buttress from the outer angle of this transept. So great is the span of this buttress that a street and part of a garden run under it. The transeptal roses are magnificent, though the effect of the northern one is impaired in some degree by a huge buttress carried up its face, from the causes enumerated above. The diminution of width in the nave as it approaches the west is very marked, but it has the effect of increasing the

¹ An excellent little volume on the Cathedrals of France, put forth in 1843 by this ecclesiastic, has formed the basis of later works on the subject.



THE SOUTH CHOIR AISLE, ST. GATIENS, TOURS

TOURS

length and adding considerably to the charm of the view westward, which terminates in a noble traceried and stained-glass window free from organ gallery or any other encumbrance. The Flamboyant work at the west end of the nave aisles is likewise extremely bold and fine. I know of few French naves so beautifully arcaded as this of Tours: long did I linger during several enraptured visits at its north-west or south-west angle, wrapt in admiration of its graceful attached piers, which seem to melt one into another.

The ritualism of the cathedral of Tours is not remarkable. Tall pseudo-Gothic grilles surround the choir, and from its roof depends a chandelier with three lights. The great organ is in the south transept, as at Le Mans. The nave aisles of few French cathedrals are so contracted as those of Tours—a narrowness rendered still more conspicuous by the closeness of their chaising. One of the chapels (that of the Sacred Heart) at the east end of the north aisle has a modern altar and reredos of singular beauty. The former, of stone, is, as usual, without antependium, and its mensa rests upon three small columns with gilt caps and bases. The stepped predella has eight arcades with niched figures, and supports the candlesticks. In the centre of this rises a lofty Gothic arcaded tabernacle richly painted and gilt. Another good modern altar is that of the Lady Chapel, which, as usual, has been profusely coloured. Its three lancets contain old glass from the church of St. Julien, collected from several windows there, the north and south walls having frescoes of the Marriage and Death of the Virgin, and of her Annunciation and Assumption. A throned figure of the Virgin and Child above the tabernacle struck me as most graceful, as did the predella with paintings of the Presentation and the Entombment. Other interesting points in the choir aisle at Tours are the fenestration of the first oblong chapel on either hand by a couple of plate-traceried two-light windows, having in the head a sexfoil; and some paintings in the northern of these chapels, curious, solemn, naturalistic, and representing in oblong panels the Apostles, St. Luke taking the place which belongs to St. Matthias. As I quit the cathedral by the west door a Sister of Charity approaches the *bénitier* and takes the holy water very reverently, kneeling. The great central door is thrown wide open, and never shall I forget the air of simple, solemn grandeur which the nave, ruby-stained by the great window, presented about half-past six in the afternoon of my second day in Tours.

The exterior of St. Gatien's does not present many features of interest. The lofty clerestory, nave chapel, and transept windows make a goodly show; but in point of splendour and leaf-like delicacy the tracery cannot compare with that in the same position at Troyes. Perhaps the most pleasing external feature, after the harmonious Flamboyant west front, with its tall flanking towers and

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graceful series of arcades just under the central gable, is the apse of the choir, spreading itself out at the base where the chapels cluster in dignified amplitude, soaring, but not at all exaggerated in its clerestory. There is no tower at the crux, the masses of roof meeting at an insignificant nondescript turret surmounted by a tall cross; for I am in France now, and not in Normandy, where the central tower almost always constitutes one of the grandest external features of the churches—as at Rouen, Fécamp, Lisieux, Dives, Coutances, and Evreux.

Altogether, Tours is a most fascinating and instructive cathedral. Arriving prepared for disappointment, I went away enchanted; while its situation in the eastern part of the city, remote from the busy streets, seems to impart to its immediate surroundings an air of calm seclusion, wanting, however, in those picturesque environments which, almost without exception, confront us in an English cathedral precinct.

I have so dilated upon the architectural glories of St. Gatien's as to render a notice of the other churches of Tours somewhat short. Dismissing, briefly, Notre-Dame-la-Riche and St. Saturnin as large Late Gothic churches, with few features to recommend them beyond their spaciousness, town-like air, and elaborate fittings, I proceed to speak more particularly of St. Julien's and of the imposing but as yet incomplete modern basilica of St. Martin.

Turner depicts St. Julien's, in his "Seine and Loire," at "an hour after sunset, with no moon, and torchlight." At that time it was a diligence office, and the drawing, which shows the south side of the nave and transept, was made from the Hôtel d'Angleterre, where the artist was probably deposited on arrival. Ruskin cites this drawing as an instance of Turner's love of chiaroscuro, and as being especially remarkable for its preservation of deep points of gloom, because the whole picture is one of extended shade.

Rescued from the degraded state to which it had fallen in 1847, St. Julien's at Tours has since been well restored, and now presents all the features of a grand cruciform church built during the palmiest days of French Gothic—the age of St. Louis. It stands so hidden among the houses at the corner of the Rue Nationale and the Rue Colbert that its grand nave, clerestory, and transept came upon me quite by surprise—a surprise by no means diminished when, descending the few steps leading from the south door to its interior, I beheld its almost minster-like proportions and distribution of parts. It consists of a low Romanesque western tower, a five-bayed nave with triforium and clerestory, transepts, and choir with double aisles, of which the external one on either side is prolonged into a poor sixteenth-century apsidal chapel. The choir has a square east end, lighted by a noble window of eight lights, below which, extending the whole width of the wall, a Cenacolo is frescoed on a gold ground.



THE APSE, ST. GATIENS, TOURS



ST. MARTIN AND ONE OF THE ABBEY TOWERS, TOURS

TOURS

Taken in conjunction with the excellent glass in the window above small subjects in roundels—this picture has a very rich appearance. The same arrangement of fenestration occurring in the square ended choir of the cathedral at Dol may be accounted for by the fact that Tours was formerly the patriarchal see of Brittany. At St. Julien's the choir, dating from about 1220, is the oldest part, its tall cylindrical columns, with their stiff leafed capitals, being set upon raised bases, which are also foliated at the angles. The transepts and nave are later, and belong to the more advanced Pointed of 1240. Here the pillars are thick cylinders, with a slender shaft at the cardinal points.

Throughout the church the workmanship is very fine, and so lengthy has been my inspection that by this time the afternoon has worn away, so I take tea at a café in a fine open space formed at the junction of the Rue Nationale and the Boulevards Heurteloup and Béranger, and then set out for a stroll round the walls in the direction again of St. Julien's, where prayers and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament are announced to commence at eight o'clock. The walk takes me along the boulevards in a north easterly direction, there being a gentle rise all the way, so that, having the walls on the right, I look down upon the Loire and Cher Canal and market gardens. On the left hand rises the enormous mass of the cathedral, its outline clearly defined against the sunset sky. The two great towers of St. Martin's are brought into the picture, and extremely grand they look. It being requisite to pass the cathedral, I cannot resist a walk round in the now quickly gathering darkness. Truly awful is the silence of the vast building—a silence broken only now and then by a cough or a chain scrooping. I make just one complete circulation, regaining the west door as the sacristan jangles his keys, eager to lock up, and then resume the walk to St. Julien's, whose interior, impressive by day, looks doubly so illuminated here and there by a few gas-jets, which serve to throw out very markedly its exquisite details, many of which, notably the flat soffits of the arches, seem to have influenced Sir Gilbert Scott when designing such churches of the later "fifties" as St. Mary's, Stoke Newington, All Souls', Halifax, and St. Matthias', Richmond. I should not omit to state that the shafts supporting the arches of the three lancet windows in the south transept repose on grotesque figures of about a foot and a half in height, a remarkable feature for this epoch of Gothic, and one which is, I believe, only met with elsewhere in the nave of Nevers.

To the sumptuous but as yet incomplete modern basilica of St. Martin, a satisfactory visit was paid early on the ensuing morning. All that remains of the once far famed abbey are the clock and Charlemagne towers. These noble masses, which formerly stood at the north east and south west angles of the nave, are now separated by one of the principal and busiest streets of Tours, which

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traverses the entire site of the nave, and beyond them not a trace remains of this large and time-honoured church, which for the alleged reason of superfluity and needless expense was ruthlessly destroyed during the early years of the present century, having survived the shock of the Revolution.

In 1861 the rock-hewn tomb, believed to have been that of St. Martin, was discovered under a house which occupied the site of the high altar. Over this a chapel, and subsequently the present noble church, in the style which brackets the Angevine and Auvergnat types of Romanesque, have been raised. With the exception perhaps of the great church of Sacré Cœur, which crowns the hill at Montmartre at Paris, this is perhaps the costliest and most imposing of modern French basilicas. It is built in the form of a cross, the transeptal and eastern wings being, however, very short, from which rises a dome surmounted by a figure of St. Martin.

The drum of this dome is lighted by a succession of small round-headed windows within pilastered arcades, and is enriched internally by a figure of the soldier-bishop vested in a chasuble, and seated against a background of gold mosaic. At present only three bays of the nave have been completed. This portion of the church has a wooden roof gabled, but not very acutely, a clerestory, of small, coupled, round-headed arches, and an arcade, also round, upon tall cylindrical columns of grey marble, with somewhat Corinthianising capitals. At the east end of the nave a noble sweep of balustraded steps leads up into the transeptal portion beneath the dome. This space is chaired, and screened beneath the north and south transept arches by parcloles with pillars of grey marble, forming an arcade on either side of a square-headed door. Some delicate stained glass in the small round-headed windows of the transepts elicits my admiration. Just under the eastern arch of the crossing are the Epistle and Gospel ambones, formed of the costliest materials, while in the simple but grandly sweeping apse, whose conch at the period of my visit greatly needed pictorial enrichment, is placed the high altar, its mensa resting on four marble shafts, and its predella being exquisitely worked in mosaic, the pattern presenting vine leaves and birds on a gold ground. The six candlesticks stand in front of this predella, which supports a baldachin—a cusped and gilt arch on banded Corinthian pillars. Each transept opens eastward into a chapel, that to the north being dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, that to the south to St. Joseph. Altars of an equally costly description grace both these chapels, similar in many respects to the high altar. The pulpit, on the *motif* of the celebrated marble one at Messina, stands against one of the nave piers on the north side. Right and left of the steps leading up to the transepts from the nave is a short flight conducting down to the crypt, whose roof is sustained by thick red granite piers.



ST. JULIEN, TOURS

TOURS

Here is the great object of veneration—the tomb of St. Martin. The shrine, a species of twin-gable temple, with two rows of four columns, is raised on a lofty plinth inlaid with mosaics in bands, gratings at the north and south ends giving a view of the tomb, before which a lamp is burning. Altogether, new St. Martin's is a superb piece of work, and one that atones, in some measure, for the loss of the mediæval abbey.

CHAPTER XII

BOURGES

AMONG the wonders of the fair which had contributed not a little towards rendering Tours more than ordinarily cheerful on the occasion of my visit, was a pair of pelicans, who, at intervals, were put through a variety of quaint performances before one of the shows lining the river-side. When not called upon to exhibit, these birds took up a position, one on either side of the platform, from which they regarded the whole scene—its dust, crowds, glare, and noise of a dozen organs playing as many different tunes—with an air of dignified serenity that was truly amusing to witness.

Feeling quite an interest in these creatures I seize the opportunity, while strolling along the quais on the following morning, before service at the cathedral, to make their closer acquaintance, so inquire after them of the proprietor who is enjoying a matutinal pipe outside the show, the glories of which are, it need hardly be remarked, sadly diminished by the searching light of morning. "Ah ! Oui ! oui ! Monsieur, les grands oiseaux blancs ! Ils ne sont pas encore levés," is the somewhat amusing rejoinder, "being somewhat fatigued with the representations ; there was much of the world here last night."

A subsequent inquiry elicited the information that they were making their toilettes, "là bas," pointing in the direction of the river, and on advancing to the quai wall I observe my friends of the preceding evening pluming and disporting themselves at a little distance with evident enjoyment in the Loire, which at this season looks little more than a thread, the bridges bestriding more sandy shore than river.

A distant farewell has been taken of the pelicans, and a closer one of an old magpie, whose friendship I had secured by some fruit while taking the air in his wicker cage outside the toll-taker's house on one of the bridges, and it is fully time to start for Bourges, the journey thither passing without incident as far as Vierzon, where trains are changed. In this part of France the long, open third-class carriages are far superior to those of the rabbit hutch kind with which I had become so familiar on the northern railways. The seats are cushioned, there is the additional luxury of a window on either side the door, and people



THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH-EAST, BOURGES

BOURGES

hang their *bagages* on pegs from the roof all down the compartment, where they present at times some very odd combinations. A polite youth in a blouse assists me with my knapsack into the carriage at Vierzon, for if you are equipped with one of those useful articles, the doors of French third-class compartments being somewhat contracted, a crab-like mode of entering is requisite, unless you wish to stick fast on the threshold. The aforesaid polite youth, his *compagnon de voyage*, and two ladies of an uncertain age—whose tongues, it is no exaggeration to say, never stopped once from their entry into the carriage at Vierzon until the debarkation of one of them at some village station a little farther on—constitute our party. In the next division an old peasant woman, with a couple of fowls in a basket, has put up her umbrella to protect them from the afternoon sun. This is thought an exquisite piece of drollery, and as nobody can do anything in France without half-a-dozen others proffering their opinion upon it, everybody else leans over the partition of his or her compartment and puts in a remark. The polite youth and his mamma, or his aunt, or whoever she may be, then proceed to partake of some refreshment, whereupon the aforesaid garrulous lady, who has said good-bye to her companion, opens fire upon them, peradventure with the view of being asked to assist at the demolition of the savoury viands, but not being invited to do so becomes less communicative, subsiding by degrees into dignified silence.

It is about half-past two when the first glimpse of the great transeptless cathedral of Bourges rising at the summit of its city is caught, seen athwart a rich tract of pastoral country intersected by willow-bordered streams inviting a dip, of which I make a mental note.

At the Hôtel Jacques Cœur, where, on account of its historic appellation, I had decided upon taking up my quarters, I find myself the only guest, so that there is no lack of attention from host and hostess, who, with their two sons, evince the greatest interest in Monsieur l'Anglais and everything pertaining to him. The younger of the sons, one of Thomas Ingoldsby's "sharp little boys about twelve years of age," is elated at the no distant prospect of being permitted to conduct Monsieur to the Musée and other "lions" of Bourges.

Under the guidance of this vivacious juvenile—who, not thinking his scholastic costume of blouse, etc., sufficiently *soignée*, comes out for the walk attired quite fashionably—I "do" these "lions," lingering somewhat longer in and about the cathedral than is agreeable to my small mentor.

The earlier part of the afternoon having been spent in the commodious bed-sitting room allotted to me, I stroll through the hilly streets towards the archiepiscopal gardens on the south side of the cathedral, where the tasteful laying-out of the flower-beds—a border of *ageratum* enclosing a medley of

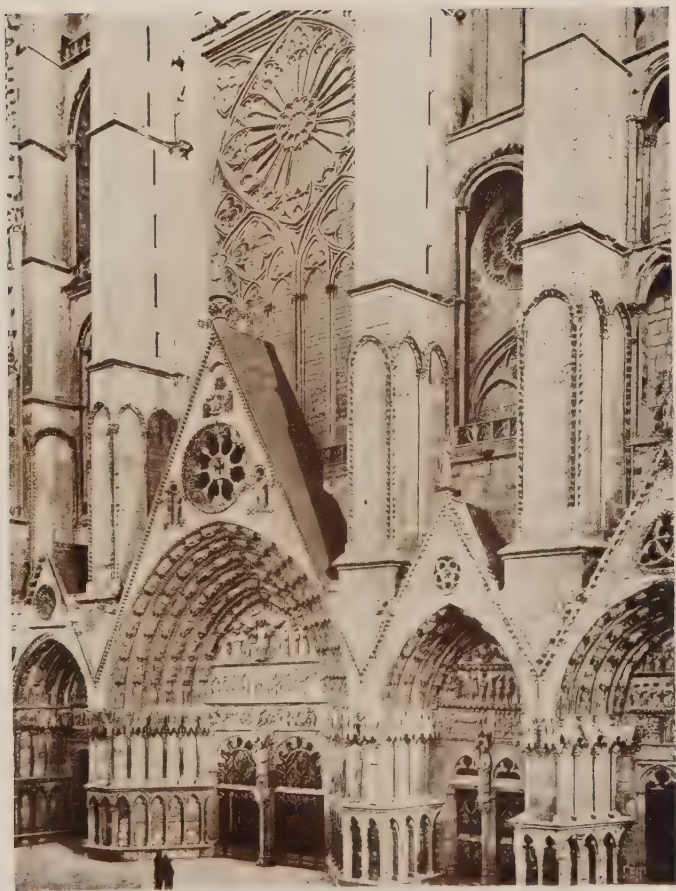
THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

geraniums, roses, and heliotrope—does not fail to call forth admiration. Next morning we are all up betimes, and after an invigorating plunge in one of the willow-bordered streamlets, followed by a brisk walk, I do ample justice to an eight o'clock breakfast, taken *en famille* with Monsieur, Madame, and their olive branches, and then, armed with notebook and pencil, repair for a long morning's work to St. Etienne. Operations cannot be commenced at once, as the canons are reciting their Morning Offices in the choir. Their rising altogether, as the clock strikes nine, is very impressive. In the north aisle two girls, with market baskets, are eating their morning meal. Although the Mass is not sung the officiating canon is served by several red-cassocked and cotta'd boys, who, having been shod with the slippers of silence for the sanctuary, emerge from the sacristy when all is over, very sublunary mortals indeed, in hob-nailed boots, making a tremendous clatter, and with no collars or wristbands to speak of. Each kneels for a short space at the choir gate as he passes, and is understood to go through a prayer. Then the Blessed Sacrament is carried down the aisle and out at the south porch, preceded by a boy in cassock and surplice bearing a Gothic candle-illuminated lantern on a pole; and very picturesque the little procession looks as it descends one of the narrow streets near the cathedral in the bright sunshine, and halts before the door whence the "sick call" has come.

"Though one of the finest and largest in France, covering 73,170 square feet, the cathedral of Bourges," says Ferguson, "is still one of the shortest, being only 405 feet in extreme length; yet owing to the central aisle being wholly unbroken it appears one of the longest, as it certainly is one of the most majestic of all." After some rather disparaging remarks about the five unequally graduated aisles, the writer continues: "It is singularly beautiful in its details and happy in its main proportions, for owing to the omission of the transept the length is exquisitely adapted to the other dimensions. Had a transept been added at least 100 feet of additional length would have been required to restore the harmony, and though externally it would, no doubt, have gained by such an adjunct, this gain would not have been adequate to the additional expense incurred.

"The greater part of the western façade of this cathedral is of a later date than the building itself, and is extended beyond the proportions required for effect so as to overpower the rest of the building, so that it is only from the sides or the eastern ends that all the beauty of this church can be appreciated."

There are five great western portals at Bourges which, viewed by themselves, are truly noble. The spirit with which the historical sculptures are designed is admirable, and even in the most serious subjects there peeps forth that gro-



THE WEST FRONT, BOURGES

BOURGES

tesque slyness which the mediæval artists knew so well how to render telling in subordination to their grand design. I spent quite an hour in deciphering the wonderful sculptured groups portrayed in these porches. In that of the Expulsion from Paradise the Serpent—or rather Dragon—is seen hurrying out before Adam and Eve with a look of most intense disgust; but a little farther on in one of the recessed orders is the Deluge, with miserable creatures struggling in the agonies of suffocation, while the serpent peeps round the corner truculently joyful. It is in the tympana of these five great western portals at Bourges that the chief beauty of their sculpture resides, the various groups reminding one of a delicate ivory triptych. The varied expression of the countenances, the elevated character of many, the easy flow of the drapery, and the good execution of the whole, bespeak the work of an eminent sculptor, but his name, as well as that of the architect of the cathedral, is unknown. The Last Judgment, in the central portal of the tympanum, is fearfully and wonderfully portrayed. Unfortunately, only five of the full-length figures lining the sides have as yet been restored. These are on the right of the central door, above which is a large six-light window of early Flamboyant character. And here praise of the façade of Bourges must cease, an incompleteness in detail and absence of accompaniments from the upper stages precluding it from ranging with those of Amiens, Paris, or Rheims.

Of the towers flanking the façade that on the south is First Pointed, and does not rise above the apex of the great central gable, with its patriarchal cross, yet it is very beautiful and harmonious in its parts. The northern one is entirely a lofty Late Gothic erection (1508-38), and, like the great south-western tower of Rouen, is called "Tour de Beurre," from its having been erected with the money raised from indulgences to eat butter in Lent. It is best viewed from the north-east, on which side of the cathedral the rapid slope of the ground from west to east is most marked. There is likewise a declivity from south to north, so that you enter the building by a porch opposite the archiepiscopal gardens, without ascending or descending steps, while to the one on the northern side there is a considerable flight.

The view of the cathedral from the north-east is undoubtedly a noble one. We do not seem to feel the want of transepts, the eye dwelling contentedly on the fine range of clerestory windows and flying buttresses, while the aisles are agreeably broken up by the numerous projecting chapels and the porches. These have for outer doors a couple of beautiful thirteenth-century cusped arches, but the inner doors are Romanesque, and, resembling those in the west front of Chartres, a doorway in St. Benigne at Dijon, and that on the south side of the nave at Le Mans, date from about the middle of the twelfth century,

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being formed of fragments of sculpture belonging to the former cathedral. "They are remarkable," says the late Mr. G. E. Street, "not only for the really astounding skill of the mechanics who wrought the curious sculptures with which their columns and other members are covered, but for the remarkable fact that, among the branches of foliage, in which the utmost skill of Byzantine artists is rivalled, nude figures and animals are represented with a feeling for nature which is all the more surprising when compared with the stiff and conventional representations of life-sized human figures in the same work."

Entering by the southern of these portals, I am perfectly overwhelmed with the breadth and majesty of this cathedral of Bourges. Its enormously lofty nave (123 feet); its grand unbroken range of columns (huge cylinders, round which several slender ones cluster); its double aisles continued right round the choir in one sweep, the inner one (71 feet high) furnished with its own triforium and clerestory, as at Coutances and Le Mans; the lovely glimpses of stained glass seen dimly athwart the great thick-clustered columns dividing these two aisles—all this bursts upon us in such a manner that it is impossible for some time to turn to the actual details of the building. The first feeling of wonder having subsided, one of slight disappointment arises in the mind of the true artist at the somewhat slovenly and coarsely designed triforium, and the too small clerestory, compared, that is to say, with the great arcades, where, by the way, we miss the grand deep series of mouldings our English arches of the same date have. The triforia consist only of five or more trefoiled and slender-shafted arcades, and in the earlier portion of the church—the choir—the tympanum of the arch in which they are pierced is left plain. One cannot help wishing that these triforia had been dispensed with altogether, as at Coutances and Le Mans, and greater height given to the clerestory windows, which in the apse are of the plate-traceried kind, and composed of two unfoliated lights with a large sexfoiled rose in the head. In the sides of the choir and nave the clerestory windows, still plate-traceried, take a three-light form, increasing in richness, together with the triforium, as they progress westward. There is a noble array of saintly figures in the choir windows of this range; while a simple grisaille, with, however, a subject in the circle, fills those of the nave. It is almost needless to say that this glass, taken into view with that of the clerestory to the inner aisle, and with that in the encircling chapels, presents a *coup d'œil* of combined solemnity and magnificence surpassed only by Chartres.

Of the fittings at Bourges, perhaps the most striking is the great *corona lucis*, suspended just at the point where the choir begins. Modelled on the celebrated one at Hildesheim, it must form, taken in conjunction with the smaller coronæ of less happy design hung all down the nave, a superb



THE SOUTH PORCH, BOURGES

BOURGES

picture when lighted up on dark afternoons or on the rare occasions of an evening service.

I once had the good fortune to be present in Amiens Cathedral during a late week-night service. It was July 29, and the festival of St. Martha, the patron saint of cooks, a large body of whom were present, and accommodated with chairs in the choir between the two rows of celebrated carved stalls. Anything more impressive in a Continental church than this service I do not remember, the ritual being most magnificent, and carried out with that pomp for which Amiens has always been celebrated.

The music was commensurate, and the manner in which one of the Psalms was sung to the fifth ending of the First Tone will long live in the memory; while the immense building, dimly lighted by a few candles placed at intervals amid the chairs in the nave, with the last rays of daylight struggling through the painted glass in the transeptal roses, the high altar and its surroundings being in a blaze of light, formed a scene which is not presented to the everyday traveller on the Continent.

At Bourges, as in the majority of French Cathedrals, the high close screen is absent, its place being taken by a low modern Gothic grille of iron, delicately and beautifully wrought. This runs right across the church, including both aisles, and forms the only visible separation between nave and choir.

Modern French ecclesiologists seem to have no idea of the light open *jubé* of wood or brass with which our cathedrals of Ely, Hereford, Lichfield, Salisbury, and Worcester have been equipped since the Gothic revival, nor of the suspended or elevated rood and attendant figures, modern examples of which have, with the approval of the clergy and to the delight of many a devout congregation, been placed of late years in not a few of our ancient and modern parish churches.

Mediæval or Early Renaissance *jubés* of a solid character exist in the Madeleine at Troyes, Notre-Dame de l'Epine near Chalons, Notre-Dame at Brou, St. Florentin near Auxerre, St. Étienne du Mont at Paris, pretty frequently in Brittany, and in the cathedrals of Albi, Limoges, and Rodez, but the churches retaining their original rood-lofts are very few, considering the immense number of ancient Gothic edifices that France possesses. This diminution must not always be attributed to the blind fury of the Huguenots and Revolutionists, but to the vitiated taste of the clergy themselves during the Louis XV period. Nowadays the low grille separating the choir of too many a great French church is but a sorry substitute for the tall light open rood, which not only imparts an air of solemnity and mystery to the building, but performs the functions of a milestone by which we may, in the imagination, measure the length of a church, and thus in the most legitimate manner makes it appear longer.

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"If anyone says that he loves Pointed architecture and hates screens, I do not hesitate to denounce him as a liar," was a pithy remark of that enthusiastic pioneer of the revival of mediæval architecture, Augustus Welby Pugin, who fought many a battle over this subject with members of the Church which he had embraced. And indeed, speaking artistically, the nave and chancel of a church are such actually distinct portions of a building that it is but reasonable they should be made to appear as such; while, without straining symbolism beyond its most common-sense import, some dignified means is needed, both practically and æsthetically, for separating this more sacred part of the building from the other, particularly in these days when, throughout the length and breadth of England, churches may be found open for private prayer and meditation during the greater part of the day.

With regard to the treatment of the chapels in the outer processional aisle at Bourges, it is not improbable that they present us with the same arrangement that Notre-Dame at Paris must have done before its fringe of Early Middle Pointed chapels was projected at the close of the thirteenth century. Here the outer wall of the second aisle has three compartments for everyone in the central apse, and from the centre division of each of these a small circular-ended chapel with a triplet of lancets is thrown out. The wall on either side the entrance to these chapels is pierced with a couplet of very broad lancets—one of the finest and most marked features of the early chevets, and one which occurs in that of Le Mans. When we go outside we see that each of these projecting chapels is bracketed out oriel-wise above the crypt, which, visible externally, is of vast extent and of the most refined thirteenth-century work.

Several of the nave chapels have been Flamboyantised, but with these exceptions few cathedrals in France have remained so unaltered by late accretions and additions as the majestic edifice which forms the subject of this chapter.

It is not often that one visits a world-famed church without disappointment. That of Bourges not only equalled but much surpassed all previously conceived ideas of it, while its situation at the summit of gently rising streets, whose picturesque houses give scale to its immensity, with the light freely admitted on all sides, and with the archiepiscopal gardens extending the whole length of its south side, is one enjoyed by few other great French churches.

The yellow sunlight of the July afternoon renders the gay *parterre* of bee-haunted flowers in the unshaded part of these gardens too dazzling to look upon, but it only trickles down in a golden shower through the encircling avenues of lime-trees upon picturesque knots of smartly coiffured *bonnes*, and upon a happy-looking group, occupied with books and work, gathered about a Sister of Charity, who occasionally hands round a bag of cakes.



THE NAVE LOOKING EAST, BOURGES

CHAPTER XIII

A SUNDAY AT BOURGES; ÉTAMPES

A STILL, hot, perfect morning. The brown cliff-like western façade of the cathedral towers up against a sky guiltless of a cloud, and an awful stillness reigns throughout the vast interior, whose eastern portions are glorified by the newly-risen sun, while its western end lies in comparative shadow. Involuntarily I recall the opening stanzas of two grand mediæval Latin hymns for the morning of the Lord's Day :—

En dies est Dominica
Summo cultu dignissima ;
Ob octavam Dominicæ
Resurrectionis sacræ ;

and

Omnes una celebremus,
Celebrando veneremus,
Christi nunc sollemnia.
Ecce Dies magnus Dei,
Dies Summæ requiei,
Dies est Dominica.

But these hallowed feelings are somewhat rudely dispelled, for on approaching one of the side chapels on the north side of the nave I find two small servers, supposed to be preparing its altar for an early Mass, indulging in a little private pantomime—hitting one another over the head with the elongated silver dish in which the cruets ordinarily repose, playing “catch who catch can” round the confessional box, and so on—performances which, concluding with a mad race to the sacristy, the slamming of whose doors reverberates through the sacred building, are, to an English Churchman with an English Churchman's reverence for holy places and holy things, exceedingly improving and pleasant, of course.

At half-past nine the Parochial Mass is performed, *sine cantu*, in the Lady Chapel ; outside it, and in the *pourtour*, the congregation, a fairly large one, is disposed all over the floor in chairs, the scene being strikingly picturesque. Their elasticity, if we may use such a term in connection with these great French

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churches, constitutes one of their greatest charms. You go to the Offices of Mass or Vespers and stand about as you please. You do not feel in anybody's way, are not stared at, do not feel obliged to fix yourself in a seat at once for the whole service, may take a chair if you please and where you please—nearer or farther from the choir or altar as you like. Should you choose, you may attend the whole or part of the service without sitting down at all, and you fall into a far more easy and natural position than in our benched and closely chaired churches at home.

The Parish Mass concluded, everyone, thinking no doubt his or her duty done for the day, hurries off, a very scanty congregation assisting at the subsequent grandly-rendered Chapter Mass at half-past ten.

While sauntering round the choir aisles listening to the solemn roll of the Plain Chant at Terce, I encounter a very benevolent-looking old cathedral dignitary, M. le Chanoine Darrenguet, with whom a lengthy conversation upon the architecture of the cathedral had been enjoyed the day before, and who had in the most polite manner conducted me round, pointing out its most interesting features, and drawing attention to such others as I might have overlooked.

Thus it happens that on Sunday morning I am accosted with a courtly bow, and an invitation to take “un banc près du maître autel,” which, however, is declined. For once at Fécamp I got so unpleasantly near the gentleman who performed on the ophicleide, or some analogous instrument, as to render a repetition of the experiment undesirable. I therefore elected to seat myself in the nave, whence a good view could be had of the various ceremonies attendant upon the performance of the Highest Office of the day, which, neither ritually nor musically, could compare in point of splendour with that at Chartres.

The music was that as set in the *Paroissien* for a “messe des doubles ordinaires”—the “Missa de Angelis” so familiar to us at home. Between each *Kyrie*, instead of executing an elaborate fantasia totally foreign to the solemnity of this portion of the Office, the organist at the west end very judiciously took up the Plain-Song strain and improvised upon it without losing sight of its severe character. As usual the congregation at Mass was distressingly scanty, though, to be sure, a large school of girls in dark-blue cloaks and poke-bonnets formed a solid block of humanity at the top of the nave on its north side.

At the afternoon service, the canons in their stalls, the officiant, coped, and seated before a desk draped with tapestry in the centre of the choir, the cantors at the lecterns, and the children of the choir in bright scarlet cassocks, transparent surplices, zuchettos, and shoes, imparted not only a touch of colour to the scene but an air of picturesqueness, enhanced when the boys grouped themselves around the lectern to sing a motet in the interval between Vespers and Compline,

A SUNDAY AT BOURGES

under the bâton of the *maître du chœur*—evidently not like Charles King,¹ of whom it was said by the choristers of St. Paul's,

"Indulgence ne'er was sought in vain,
He never smote with stinging cane,"

but a regular martinet of a choir-master of the type alluded to by Thomas Ingoldsby :—

"With front severe,
And brow austere,
Now and then pinching a little boy's ear
When he chaunts the responses too late or too soon,
Or his Do, Ré, Mi, Fa, Sol, La's not quite in tune."

The congregation this afternoon at Bourges was again but scanty, the most favoured portion being the aisle betwixt the choir grilles, up which a child was clambering all the time of *Magnificat*, quite unchecked by his relative, who was enjoying an animated gossip with her next-door neighbour. One interesting feature I noticed during these afternoon services, and that was at Benediction, when the officiant, vested of course in a cope, was assisted by a deacon and sub-deacon in dalmatic and tunicle respectively.

The day's services concluded, I paid a visit to the Maison Jacques Cœur, where a quiet and leisurely inspection of the numerous objects of antiquity that have been collected therein was enjoyed, and to the church of St. Pierre-aux-Corps—one generally overlooked, but deserving of notice if only on account of the slope of its floor from east to west. To the architectural student this church presents several features of considerable interest, one of them being the discrepancy between the two nave arcades, referable to a fire which did much damage to the city in 1487. The south arcade of St. Pierre-aux-Corps is an excellent specimen of First Pointed work, with columns of the "compound" type—four slender shafts disposed around a core.

The northern arches belong to the Third Age, and spring from half-shafts attached to a square pier, as in the little church of St. Ethelburga, Bishopgate. The apse of St. Pierre, with its five acutely pointed arches, presents an imposing appearance from the west end of the church, due to the gradual ascent of the floor to the east as in the nave of the cathedral at St. David's. It has, like the south side of the nave, a clerestory of small lancets, and is vaulted in the most fascinating style of the thirteenth century, recalling, on a small scale, the work in Notre-Dame, Dijon.

There are no transepts here, nor is there any visible separation between nave and choir. A square tower with low stunted spire stands at the west-end. The

¹ Charles King, Mus. B., Almoner of St. Paul's, Master of the Boys 1707-48, and composer of much Church music still in use in our cathedrals. The number of services he wrote gained for him the sobriquet of the "Serviceable."

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former is open on three sides, beautiful pointed arches of Early Gothic character admitting north and south to a species of narthex, while above that leading into the nave is another arch, affording a view of the interior of the tower, with its western Middle Pointed window gracefully traceried and of three lights.

At five o'clock on the ensuing Monday morning I was saying good-bye to Bourges Cathedral from the platform of the railway station, just as the sun was lighting up the cross on the apse, and then, as the train leaving the city traversed the dreary district of La Sologne, I settled myself to finish the night's rest as well as a knapsack and the seat of a third-class French railway-carriage permitted; waking, however, just in time to see that last rocket flung up by the expiring Pointed style of France—Orleans Cathedral—rising up white against a cloudless sky out of the vast plain.

Presently it was lost, and we were crossing the somewhat less monotonous La Beauce, whose village churches, passed in quick succession, all seemed to present the same local characteristic, viz. the gabled tower and the square east end. Many of these buildings would, I opine, repay examination in case of detention or overmuch leisure.

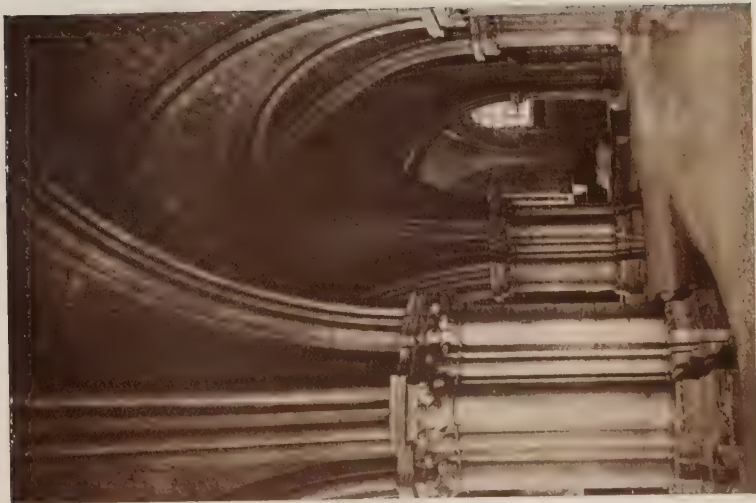
The features just noticed occur in all the four Étampes churches, whose towers rising above the houses in bold architectural masses impart to this quiet old town an air of ecclesiastical opulence which the visitor is able to enjoy immediately on leaving the station without having first to traverse a dusty boulevard or "Rue de la Gare."

Among these churches, in which may be traced a line of demarcation between the Pointed of northern and central France, the best part of the morning was spent, page after page of a notebook being filled with memoranda, of which the following are a few excerpts.

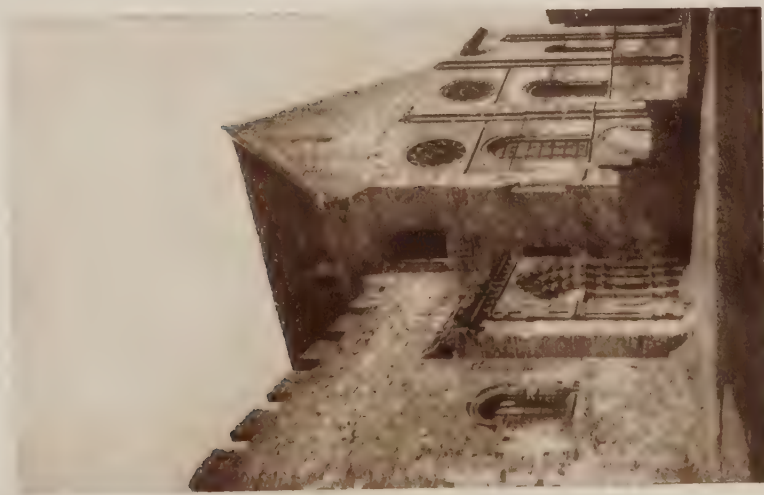
The largest and most important of the Étampes churches is Notre-Dame, one of the most irregularly planned of my acquaintance.

It embraces a choir with square end¹; a double north aisle also rectangular,

¹ The square-ended choir is not so exclusively insular a feature as is popularly supposed. Allusion has already been made in these pages to the rectangularly terminated churches of Dol, St. Julien, and Notre Dame-la-Riche at Tours, and some mention will be found hereafter of choirs similarly planned at Creil and in its vicinity. The most grandly dimensioned square-ended French church is the *ci-devant* cathedral of Laon—a curious example of how the infusion of a democratic element, from causes that space precludes from detailing here, caused a total departure in several particulars from the ecclesiastical traditions in architecture then everywhere prevailing. Although some would appear to be earlier than the cathedral which so grandly dominates them, many of the country churches near Laon—that of Vaux-sous—Laon among their number—have square-ended choirs, and those who have made a study of the exquisitely beautiful village church architecture around Caen will have observed that the apse by no means predominates. Italy has one square-ended Pointed church, that of St. Andrew at Vercelli, the first Gothic church, as is well known, across the Alps, and built, moreover, under distinct English influence, though by a French



THE CRYPT, NOTRE-DAME



THE SOUTH TRANSEPT, NOTRE-DAME, ÉTAMPES

but with its walls and arcade of separation inclining to the south; two south aisles, both apsidal, the outer wall slanting very markedly in a southerly direction; double transepts, *i.e.* two in juxtaposition; nave of two bays with very broad aisles, and a large narthex not at all in the plane of the nave, but sloping from north-east to south-west, and above which is the steeple.

This singular deviation of Notre-Dame at Étampes from the usual rectilinear form is due partly to the nature of the ground and partly to the character of the building, which is at once fortress and church. The structure in question forms by no means a solitary proof of the perils to which religion was exposed in mediæval times, and the necessity under which Churchmen lay of calling in military assistance for the defence not only of their own lives and property, but of many others also, who, at the approach of danger, fled to the church or monastery for protection.

Ste. Cécile at Albi is an example of those ecclesiastical fortresses which are of frequent occurrence in the south of France.

Danger appears to have been apprehended chiefly upon the eastern side of Notre-Dame, for here we find the windows placed at a great elevation from the ground, and above the chapels are casemated chambers for troops, with loop-holes as in other fortifications, and it was probably with a view to greater security that the usual semicircular or polygonal termination to the main choir was abandoned in favour of the rectangular one, the projecting apsidal ends of the flanking aisles serving as bastions for the defence of the high altar.

The nave of two bays has a clerestory composed of two wide lancets and a circle with inverted cusps, like those in the apse of St. Étienne at Auxerre. The remainder of the church is unclerestoried, and from the transepts the effect of the lofty arcades, owing to the double aisles on either side of the choir, with

architect. Some will remember either the engravings of its interior in Gally Knight and in Street's *Brick and Marble of North Italy*, or the description of it in Webb's *Continental Ecclesiology*. The square end is common in certain parts of Germany, particularly in Westphalia, where it occurs in the cathedrals of Osnabrück and Paderborn, in the conventual churches of Essen, Herford, Loccum St. John at Osnabrück, and Marienfeld, and in the parish churches of Büren and St. Mary on the Hill at Herford—to quote but a few examples. In Germany the original aisleless apse reproduced itself down to the late days of national Pointed—aisles as well as choirs being thus terminated, and in such churches as St. Peter's and St. Mary in the Meadows at Soest, the five-aisled St. Victor at Xanten, the Petri Kirche at Görlitz, and the Marien Kirche at Mühlhausen, with extremely beautiful effect, particularly where, as in the Meadow church at Soest, the elongated windows have retained their original glazing. In cruciform German churches one or more of these apses project from the eastern side of either transept. The German *penchant* for this particular form of eastern termination, and the tardy adoption of the French arrangement with its procession path and corona of chapels, seem to have been dictated by a strict regard for the orientation of side altars. Cologne and Altenburg are perhaps the only two really successful German choirs planned on the French model, the few others presenting the same arrangement—Münster, Osnabrück, Magdeburg, Halberstadt, Doberan and the Marien Kirche at Lübeck—being far from happy.

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their slender clustering pillars and delicately foliated capitals, is exceedingly striking.¹ The church is mainly First Pointed, but retains portions of an earlier structure, notably the steeple, whose composition, as regards the spire-lights and pinnacles, is in effect not unlike those met with in Caen and its district.

Generally speaking, the windows in the choir are tall lancets in triplets, the wall-space at the apex of the central and highest lancet and between the centre and side one being pierced with a small quatrefoiled circle. The fenestration of the great double south transept is effected in each division by one broad lancet surmounted by a large wheel window. Taken in conjunction with the richly sculptured south portal, which closely adjoins it, this transeptal façade of Notre-Dame at Étampes succeeds in producing an architectural group of much dignity and interest. Altogether this is a most remarkable church, and deserves the closest attention, whether as regards plan or detail, from the student.

St. Basile, the first of the Étampes churches encountered on emerging from the railway station, is a large cruciform structure with aisled nave and chancel, and chapels to both on the south. The exterior is almost entirely Flamboyant, though Romanesque work can be traced here and there.

The west door, restored, in imitation of the original, in terra cotta, is highly enriched Romanesque.

The central tower, very low and massy, is good Transition, and has a roof of the hipped gabled form. The outer aisle of the nave being an afterthought, the transept terminates in a line with the inner one; a screen, therefore, is thrown from the outer nave aisle to that of the choir, the space within it serving as a porch. The general aspect of St. Basile internally is Flamboyant, and there is not a pier capital throughout the edifice, the arch mouldings dying off into the imposts.

In the Renaissance period the authorities appear to have been seized with a desire to classicise the whole, and by way of commencement turned the buttresses of the south aisle into Corinthian pilasters, but they seem to have progressed thus far when, fortunately, their funds failed. An external inscription runs thus: "Faxit Deus perficiar. 1559."

St. Giles, another Flamboyant church with earlier remains, is pleasing from its simple solidity. Here the tower is likewise central, and terminates in a cruciform saddleback of satisfactory outline and peculiar construction.

The object of the architect seems to have been the adaption of a square tower, narrower than either the nave, chancel, or transepts. Its base is square, visible above the nave roof, but hidden by the greater elevation of those of the eastern and transeptal limbs.

¹ A charming drawing of this choir of Notre-Dame at Étampes, in its unrestored condition, will be found in Petit's *Architectural Studies*.

ÉTAMPES

From the angles rise triangular slopes, as if for an octagon, and on these, as well as on the space left on each of the faces of the tower, stand equal gables---four cardinal and four diagonal. The points of the latter support the angles of a smaller square tower, whose faces fall behind the gables resting on the sides of the base.

The nave has one aisle on the south, each window being surmounted by a gable, as in many of the Belgian and German churches.

There are two aisles on the north, their internal separation being effected by an arcade carried on short Tuscan pillars with rather lofty plinths. In the chancel the vaulting shafts have that peculiar twisted moulding met with now and then in French Late Gothic work. Among the remains of the earlier church are some pier bases and caps and the western doorway, which is Romanesque, and has an arch of three orders boldly moulded with torus and hollow, the two outer orders supported by shafts set in re-entering angles. The label has a kind of large head-nail, forming a rough hexagonal pyramid.

A little distance to the south stands St. Martin's, superior to all the other churches of Étampes, as being purer and freer from Late Gothic alterations. Conceived in a very vigorous mingling of the Round arched and Pointed styles, it may be cited as an excellent model of a large parish church, quite clear of any pretensions to the cathedral type, yet embracing such features requisite for the performance of solemn functions as a procession path and three chapels, an arrangement more common in the Romanesque and Transitional churches of central and southern France---the Auvergnat, for example---than in those of the north. The nave and choir are comprised under one line of roof; the tower---an erection of the Renaissance closely following the old local models, and finished with a carefully moulded cruciform saddleback---leans considerably. It stands at the west end, but is detached a few feet from it.

The First Pointed work of this church is unusually fine, and a charming feature is the coupling of the alternate pillars in the apse after the fashion of those at Sens and in the apse of Coutances.

Altogether I was much delighted with Étampes, and at the appointed hour seated myself in high good humour to the *déjeuner*. It was not a little amusing after the habitués had discussed their meal to see Monsieur and Madame, with *la petite* between them, sit down with the whole establishment to the enjoyment of it. Involuntarily one recalled that finest chapter in "Adam Bede," wherein the early supper party at the Hall Farm is drawn with a fidelity that has rarely been surpassed.

With pleasant recollections of this richly-churched old town I arrived, after a railway ride of about half an hour's duration, in the brilliant Lutetia.

CHAPTER XIV

SENS AND JOIGNY

IT was on an early August Sunday afternoon, exactly a year subsequent to that described in the chapter on Chartres, when, as the train from Paris steamed into the station of the little archiepiscopal city of Sens, I caught my first glimpse of its time-honoured cathedral.

The morning had been very showery, but now the clouds had rolled away and were lying piled upon the horizon in silvery Alp-like masses.

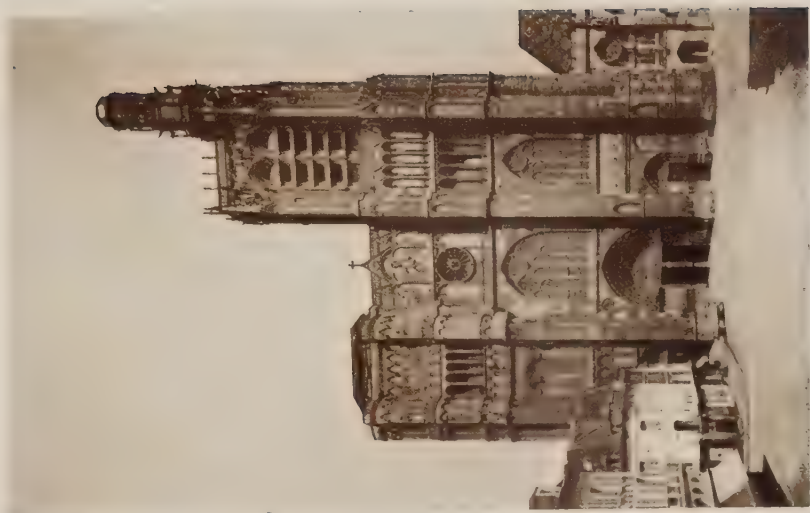
The two great bells—Savinienne and Potentielle¹—striking upon the ear as I crossed the bridge spanning the Yonne, which had leaped and danced in the sunlight nearly all the way beside the train from Paris, I quickened my pace up the narrow, hilly Grande Rue, desirous of assisting at one of the postprandial Offices whose commencement the bells had, I opined, announced.

But accommodation must first be secured and the dust of travel washed off, and ere these matters could be satisfactorily accomplished, Vespers were more than half over. However, I was in time to hear the last Psalm—the *Laudate Pueri*—with its Antiphon proper to the Festival of the Transfiguration, “Adhuc eo loquente, ecce nubes lucida obumbravit eos,” and then, following the Short Chapter, there rolled majestically through the columned aisles to a grand old Plain-Song melody the Office Hymn :—

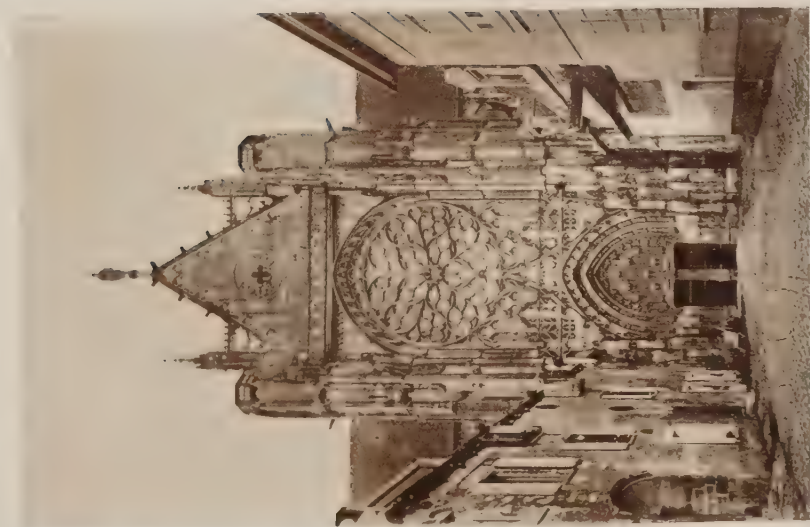
Quicumque Christum quaeritis,
Oculos in altum tollite :
Illic licebit visere
Signum perennis gloriæ.

Pleasant it is on the morrow to wake up at Sens and see the grey west front of the cathedral with the “Majesty” at its summit, which seems to keep guard

¹ When, towards the close of 1793, Catholicism was abolished by the Terrorists, and when the abdication of its externals by the priests of a nation surrounded for so many ages by the pomp and power of its worship constituted one of the most extraordinary acts of the French revolutionary spirit, when ecclesiastical vestments were trailed in the mire, asses ridden round cathedral aisles, service-books torn to shreds or hurled on bonfires, and the sacred vessels degraded to the most horrible uses, these two great bourdons of Sens escaped being cast into money or cannon. Founded in 1560 they were named after Savinien and Potentien, two early Christian missionaries to the Senones, their respective keys being A flat and F sharp.



THE WEST FRONT, SENS



THE NORTH TRANSEPT, SENS

SENS AND JOIGNY

over the city, rising against a cobalt sky above the red-tiled roof of the *porte cochère*.

I am soon out and paying a second enraptured visit to the cathedral, from which I return, after a good hour's work with notebook and pencil, to breakfast in the shady courtyard, the dog, cat, and parrot of the establishment, who are good enough to "assist" in the despatch thereof, evincing, meanwhile, a disposition to swear eternal friendship.

About nine o'clock one of the bourdons --whether Savinienne or Potentielle, I know not -- sends her voice (bells, I believe are ladies in France) over the city, and I re-enter the cathedral with pleasurable anticipations of hearing some good Plain Chant for an hour or so, seating myself in front of the choir screen. But its gates remain unlocked; the huge Office books rest unclasped on the lecterns, against which are propped up the bass viols in green greatcoats, and the altar candles are unlighted. Evidently Sens is one of those cathedrals from which, owing to pecuniary losses, the daily musical service has been banished, and this is confirmed when, on reaching the chapel of St. Savinien --which here takes the place of that usually assigned to the Blessed Virgin--I find the canons saying their Morning Offices within its gates and behind curtains snugly but only partly drawn.

However, I console myself with the reflection that there is before me a long and uninterrupted day in and about this parent of our own Canterbury, so valuable and interesting as a specimen of French Gothic during its transition from the Round-arched to the Pointed style.

Externally Sens Cathedral, like Auxerre, Meaux, Soissons, and Troyes, suffers from an air of incompleteness consequent upon its having but a solitary western square steeple, which here has been equipped with a south-western turret, combining boldness and grace, from the hand of an architect of the Early Renaissance. Bereft of its northern tower, a leaden one more curious than beautiful, early in the "forties" of the last century, the west front of Sens Cathedral, rich as is the almost classical purity of the sculptured effigies lining its triple portals, cannot be pronounced imposing. Neither is it harmonious, chiefly because of the abrupt manner in which two large complete Gothic windows have been inserted in the earlier masonry. Grandeur is, however, imparted by the adjoining Palais Synodal, where six Geometrical Decorated windows present an unusually splendid example of fenestration.

There is no central steeple here, nor do the roofs meet even in the simple *flèche*, the absence of which from so many of the great cruciform French churches, equipped only with one tower, imparts to them a sameness of outline, confusing to those not versed in the smaller details of their physiognomies.

THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

Perhaps the grandest view of Sens Cathedral is to be gained from a small enclosed piece of ground on the north side, and entered from the narrow stony lane conducting to the glorious Flamboyant transept façade by a picturesque Renaissance gateway.

Immediately on entering Sens Cathedral by the western doors, its resemblance to the Choir of Canterbury cannot fail to strike the most unobservant, and this is chiefly proclaimed by the great circular columns, disposed, back to back, in pairs with Corinthian capitals; by the rings on some of the smaller shafts, and by the same system of vaulting. Yet there is a refinement of detail and elegance of *ensemble* about Canterbury which we somehow miss at Sens, although the earlier and purer work of the two.

Until the restorations conducted under M. Viollet-le-Duc's direction, five-and-thirty years ago, the nave aisles, like those of so many foreign churches, were fringed with Middle Pointed chapels, as may be seen from a view in the volume on Champagne in Taylor and Nodier's "*Voyages dans l'Ancienne France*." These, solely from the desire to bring back this part of the cathedral to its primitive state, were removed, new walls built, and pierced by large Romanesque windows, below which small triple arcades admit to a series of low cavernous-looking chapels, whose lancet windows are equipped by M. Didron with stained glass of much richness and brilliancy of tincture. All this work is good of its kind and uninterestingly respectable, but the loss of those Middle Pointed chapels, whether regarded historically or picturesquely, is to be deplored.

Against one of the piers on the north side is a fine but sadly-mutilated reredos, forming part of the tomb erected by an archbishop of Sens—Tristan de Salazar—to his parents. Terribly maltreated during the Revolutionary fury, it was stripped of its statues; but two, that of the Virgin and St. Stephen, were restored subsequently. To my disgust, I find all the part of this reredos within pencil-reach scribbled over with names, a pastime which one inseparably associates with the British Protestant public; but, it appears, I am mistaken.

The glories of Sens Cathedral are undoubtedly the great rose windows in the transepts—whirlpools of gorgeous, though somewhat coarse, sixteenth century stained glass, executed by four artists of Troyes; while, of their kind, very splendid are the side windows of these transepts, two of which, bearing the effigies of archbishops and saints of local celebrity, are the work of the Sens artists, Hympe and Grassot, whose pupil was the celebrated Jean Cousin. The Flamboyant architect has almost transformed this portion of the cathedral, and it is a wonder that M. Viollet-le-Duc, with his love of uniformity, has not transmuted it into Late Romanesque. Great curiosities exist in the Decorated



144 WINDOW IN THE SOUTH TRANSEPT, SENS

SENS AND JOIGNY

chapel opening out of the southern arm on its eastern side, viz. a fourteenth-century statue of the Blessed Virgin, and the Lady altar-piece, a specimen of Renaissance brass-work so singularly free from the vulgarities and extravagances of the later school that I am unable to resist giving an illustration of it. Tall iron gates admit from the transepts to the choir aisles, the southern one of which contains a staircase leading to the treasury through three graceful round-headed arches on slender shafts. Here I am shown the mitre, alb, girdle, maniple, stole, and chasuble of St. Thomas à Becket, who fled to Sens in 1164 to escape the wrath of Henry II, and in one of the windows of the northern aisle is some price-less thirteenth-century stained glass with subjects—in, of course, the medallion style—from the life and martyrdom of the archbishop.

Like Canterbury, Sens Cathedral was originally planned with a single chapel at the east end, but during the Rococo period one was thrown out on either side of it, with windows in grisly imitation of Romanesque, but which from their breadth serve to give effect to some large circular medallions of ancient glass temporarily placed in them.

The northern of these chapels, separated from the aisle by a splendid grille, shown in the accompanying illustrations, contains a monument by Coustou to the Dauphin, son of Louis XV and father of Louis XVI, and properly removed here during Viollet-le-Duc's restoration from the choir, where it occupied a far too conspicuous position. There are also fine kneeling effigies of the brothers Jacques and Jean Perron, Archbishops of Sens; also the tomb of the chancellor Duprat, a plain marble sarcophagus surrounded by bas-reliefs representing events in his life—one, his entry into Paris as legate, the other into Sens as archbishop. This cathedral, therefore, may be cited as unusually rich in good sculpture of the post-Gothic period. As I mentioned just now, the central chapel (1206) is dedicated to St. Savinien, and a somewhat painful sculptured representation of his martyrdom forms the reredos, to the concealment of some of the lovely old thirteenth-century painted glass in the windows, which, as well as those in the clerestory throughout the building, are of an early Geometrical character. The background to this subject is a drapery in stucco, having, when seen from a distance, exactly the appearance of a piece of sail-cloth temporarily suspended to facilitate repairs.

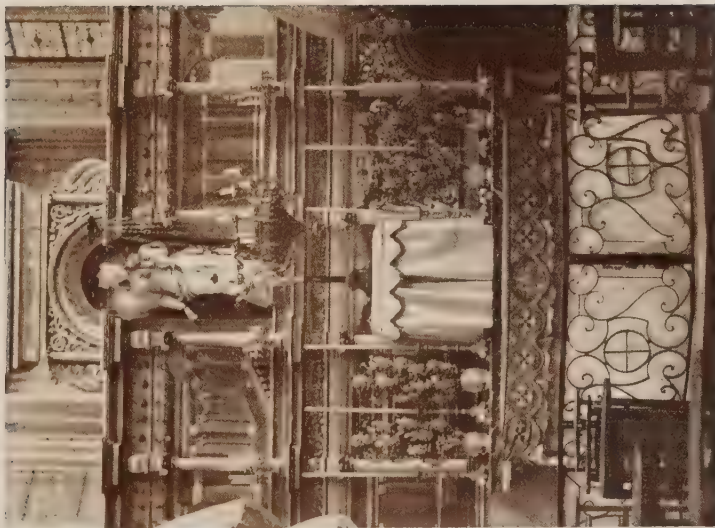
In the choir the three windows lighting the apse, each of two trefoil-headed compartments with a small traceried circle, glow with valuable thirteenth-century glass. The central one contains, within medallions, a number of small groups of the Passion of Our Lord, who is represented within the surmounting trefoil in the act of blessing. The left hand window is illustrative of events in the life of the Blessed Virgin, while the opposite one is devoted to the history of the

THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

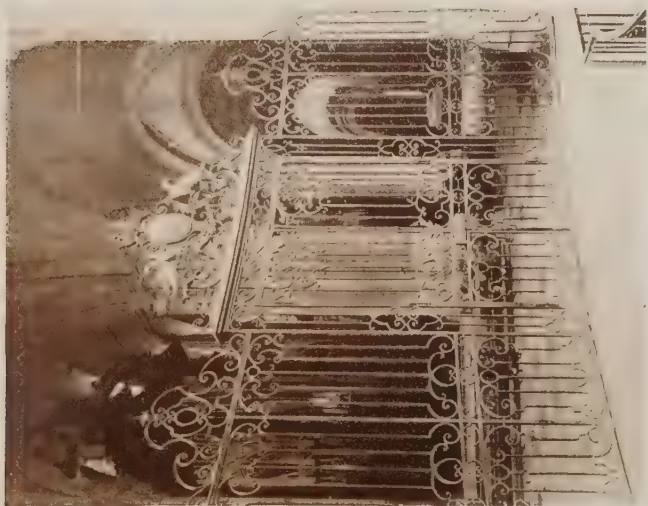
cathedral's patron, St. Stephen. The six windows of the choir clerestory on either side are simply *en grisaille*, but the circlets above the lights have small figures of our Lord and the Apostles, in tinctures of exceeding delicacy, yet brilliancy.

Like those of most French cathedrals, the sanctuary fittings at Sens are in the First Empire style, with spindle-shanked crimson-velvet-covered stools for priests and servers. The high altar is Classical, a baldacchino on the *motif* of that in St. Peter's, at Rome, and the work of Servandoni, 1742, surmounting it. Although, of course, opposite in feeling, this really fine work harmonises better than one would expect with the Corinthian-like Transition columns of the apse and sanctuary, beside seeming to impart an air of greater length to the choir. The choral arrangements do not call for lengthened notice. The close screen and gates, and the high-backed stalls, shown in Nesfield's drawing of the cathedral in his "Twelfth and Thirteenth Century Specimens," and which formerly concealed the beautiful pillars, have given place to a low screen of wrought iron, quiet and unobtrusive. This is carried right round the apse, where it branches up into coronæ of candles.

The churches of the city, of course, sink into insignificance beside the cathedral, yet they are worth visiting, some feature of interest being presented by all. St. Jean, standing picturesquely to the east of the cathedral, with its severe-looking western façade and unbroken line of roof, is but a fragment of a once noble church, a mixture of the Pointed of Champagne and Burgundy. The apse and eastern chapels remain *in statu quo*, and so do the huge pillars and arches opening into the transepts, which, as well as the nave and central steeple, have disappeared. One long roof is carried over the whole structure, which now serves as the chapel of the Hôtel Dieu. In the western front is a round window with tracery clumsily but by no means badly imitated from First Pointed. The gem of this fragment is undoubtedly the processional aisle around its apse, in *motif* recalling Pontigny. This circumambient aisle, which opens into a square-ended Lady Chapel, is the very embodiment of Early First Pointed or rather Transitional purity, the lower portion of the walls being enriched with round-headed arcades, and the upper lighted by lancet windows, whose stilted heads with their plain deep intrados seem to have furnished the late William Burges with the model for those in his striking and abnormal church of St. Faith, Stoke Newington. Of such depth are the reveals of these lancets that between the slender shafts supporting their arches and the wall there is sufficient space to form a colonnade. Most deeply do I regret my inability to convey, by an illustration, a more adequate idea of this piece of Champenois-Bourgnignon Gothic.



THE LADY ALTAR, SENS



GRILLE IN THE NORTH CHOIR AISLE, SENS

Returning to the western part of the city, and remarking, *en passant*, the noble view of the cathedral from the Place Drapes, I find St. Pierre, a church chiefly of Flamboyant character, and consisting of a nave with north aisle. Here is some interesting coeval painted glass, good eighteenth-century grills stretching right across the church, and a very fine Corinthian wainscot carried along the whole length of the south wall below the windows. A lofty Corinthian altar-piece, a large eagle lectern in the midst of the choir, a plain barrel-shaped roof with tie-beams, and a large circular window with eight cusps; at the west end of the north aisle, are other features evoking my attention in this church.

During a pleasant stroll in the outskirts of Sens I make the acquaintance of three very good specimens of modern French Gothic, viz., the chapels attached to the religious seminaries of the Sacré-Cœur, L'Immaculée Conception, and Saint-Esprit, the stained glass in the last-named, from the atelier of Didron, being alone worth a visit.

I must not forget that close to the river, which is spanned by a picturesque bridge, sustaining an iron crucifix, stands the little church of St. Maurice, with some thirteenth-century remains in the shape of arcades. For the purpose of widening the river at this point the apse has been demolished, and a clumsy square eastern termination substituted, thus depriving the building of much of that picturesqueness which in its pristine condition it must have presented.

I quit Sens with many regrets after a couple of days' sojourn and, once more strapping on my knapsack, descend the straggling Grand Rue for the last time. An Englishman in this comparatively little visited old French cathedral city is something of a *rara avis*, and I find that my comings and goings attract a considerable amount of public curiosity. Like Rev. Thomas Frognall Dibdin, of bibliographical fame, I take off my hat to the great cathedral as the train slowly leaves the station, and as it passes close by the old church of St. Savinien¹ I am able to get a last look at that too. Its beautiful old Early Pointed tower, capped with a low spire, rises between the nave and chancel, the whole presenting a very imposing appearance, chiefly from the absence of transepts, the nave aisle being carried along the side of the tower in lieu of them. Another grand church comes into view at Villeneuve, but I do not break the journey (which is a most pleasant one) here. On my left the Yonne keeps me company until the train reaches Joigny, where I find that railway arrangements give me a clear five hours for wandering about its steep crooked streets, in which something pic-

¹ The interior of this church is, from its utter simplicity, one may say rudeness, inexpressibly solemn. The square-ended chancel is raised above the crypt, the entrance to which faces the spectator as he stands looking eastwards, as in so many German churches. Steps on either side of the aisle conduct to the chancel. The stone slab of the altar in the crypt is said, not without reason, to be that on which the body of St. Savinien was laid after his martyrdom.

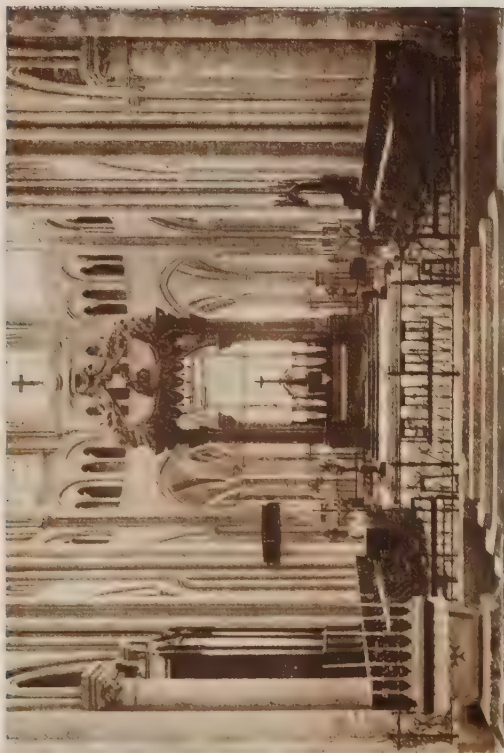
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turesque occurs at every turn, making me, unable of myself to produce the feeblest specimen of art, long for the pencil of a Pugin, a Nesfield, or a Norman Shaw.

The old town, which lies on the other side of the river, possesses three churches, not particularly interesting from an antiquarian, but extremely so from an ecclesiological, point of view. Of these churches—all Late in style—I will describe one, St. Jean-Baptiste, the largest and one of the most extraordinary structures of the kind produced by the Renaissance that I have ever seen. St. Jean-Baptiste at Joigny is both substantial and lofty, having a nave and choir (with aisles and chapels) both under one line of roof, and a western tower. The clerestory, consisting of large four-light windows in a very coarse kind of Flamboyant, but undeniably imposing, is carried upon arches whose mouldings die off into the piers in lieu of being brought down upon capitals—a very common feature of late continental Gothic. Between each clerestory window is a slender Tuscan half-pillar, from which the vaulting springs, similar to that in Wren's church of St. James's, Piccadilly; the aisles' vaulting is, however, much purer. Coloured figures of the Apostles are niched above the nave piers, and the fittings of the nave and chancel, the latter with return stalls, are solid and handsome. The apse clerestory windows differ from those in the nave, and are very curious, consisting of two square-headed lights under a round arch, which has by way of tracery a simple circle. St. Jean-Baptiste's evinces traces of an earlier building, for there are some good attached columns on either side the nave; one bay (the easternmost on either side) is Middle Pointed, and the remains of a fine tomb and effigy of a knight are embedded in the wall of the tower. At St. Thibault's, the purest of the three churches, the most remarkable feature is the flight of steps inside the west door, recalling All Saints', Hastings.

These extraordinary churches haunt me, and desirous of procuring photos, I scour Joigny with that object. Enquiry at shop after shop elicits the answer that they have never been "done," or that they never kept them; or last week they had more than they knew what to do with; that they expected plenty more the day after to-morrow, and so on; till I give up the search in despair. No one on the way from Paris to Dijon should omit visiting Joigny; it furnishes an excellent example of an old French town, with its walls and its gates flanked by sugar-loaf turrets, outside which the boulevards, completely encircling the place, make a most enchanting foliaged walk; here, having exhausted the ecclesiology of the place, I stroll for a considerable time, book in hand, until five o'clock, when I am once more in the train, *en route* for St. Florentin.

I catch a glimpse of a church or two. A very fine one occurs just before reaching the junction at Laroche—long, cruciform, with a low, central, octagonal



THE CHOIR, 1855

SENS AND JOIGNY

tower and pyramidal capping. There is a short wait at Laroche, while the engine goes off on some unknown errand. Walking up and down the platform, it is amusing to watch the occupants of the train, which is a very long one bound for Marseilles. Soon it is off again, and St. Florentin, with its great Beauvais-like church perched on top of one of the two hills on and between which the town stands, comes into view about six o'clock. Here again the railway is still farther removed from the town—quite a mile and a half of dusty road intervening between it and the station, so I am glad to avail myself of the omnibus. Mounting to the box, and chatting with the driver—an Alsatian, who amuses me not a little by his endeavours to spell out the titles of the few books which I carry strapped together—the drive from the station to the town of St. Florentin proves a very pleasant one, the declining sun throwing a glorious flood of light over the flat country. On the way to the *salle à manger*, Madame informs me with an air of great importance that I shall meet three English Messieurs at table. As they “spike the Angleish,” I suppose they are all one to Madame, but the said Messieurs turn out to be Americans—three very gentlemanly young fellows, whom it is a real pleasure to meet and converse with once more in the mother tongue. So animated gossip ensues pending the arrival of, and during, dinner, which is served in a pleasant room with windows commanding a fine tract of open country lying north of St. Florentin.

CHAPTER XV

PONTIGNY AND AUXERRE

THE day on which I made the acquaintance of the two great churches whose names head this chapter, and to which I had long looked forward, is one never to be forgotten.

The morning is glorious beyond description, and after "assisting" at one of the early Masses in the great church of St. Florentin, I partake of something more substantial than the coffee and rolls of the *petit premier déjeuner*. Leaving superfluous baggage to await my return, I take sufficient for two or three days' absence, and while the day is yet young start on my pilgrimage to Pontigny, which is reached after a most enjoyable walk of an hour and a half, encountering no one but a peasant or two, who give me a cheery "bon jour." The sun is high in the heavens when I come in sight of the long, red-tiled roof of the great Cistercian church, which remains to testify to the severity of taste with which St. Bernard inspired the Order. Edited, so to speak, in the very simplest Burgundian form of the Lancet style, the abbey church of Pontigny has something unpretending, something pleasantly English about its lancet-pierced walls which, I hardly know why, it is difficult to disassociate from the Kentish or Berkshire meadows, whence came those saintly self-exiled prelates whose names are constantly in mind when pacing the now silent aisles, or musing amid the placid environments.

The plan of Pontigny abbey church embraces a nave and choir terminating in a graceful chevet of seven narrow bays, reminding one of a nun's coif, both contained under one long, unbroken roof, and both aisled, the latter being equipped with an outer aisle which forms internally a series of chapels.

The transepts are roofed at a lower level, and here a departure from the prevailing sternness, though a very temperate one, is perceptible in the octofoiled circular window which lights the principal face of each. The choir-fittings, the high altar, and the *châsse* of St. Edmund date from the beginning of the eighteenth century; there are no accretions of the Middle or Flamboyant Gothic periods, and the church remains bodily in the same state as when Becket

PONTIGNY AND AUXERRE

received within it the monastic habit at the hands of Guickard, the second abbot, A.D. 1164.

Indeed, the simplicity of Pontigny entitles it to be held up as a model for a town church where, means being straitened, neither dignity nor good effect need be sacrificed when the work is entrusted to a master hand.

Great claims has this solemn old early Burgundian Gothic structure upon the veneration of English Churchmen. The remembrance of Thomas à Becket—who, according to the legend, while in prayer here before one of the altars had a Divine vision, accompanied by the words, "Thomas, Thomas, my church shall be glorified by thy blood"—is not the only link between Canterbury and Pontigny. Two other of our archbishops found shelter here, and one of them still lies in the church. Stephen Langton, with some of the Chapter of Canterbury, took refuge here from the tyranny of King John in 1207, and, if the tradition be correct which assigns to Langton the existing division of our Bible into chapters and verses, Pontigny was most probably the scene of his labours. But the crowning glory of this religious house is the shelter it gave to Edmund, Archbishop of Canterbury, who with St. Richard his chancellor, despairing of the condition of England and of her Church, which was completely (A.D. 1240) in the hands of foreigners, voluntarily exiled himself, and in November of the same year died here, enfeebled, it is said, by excessive abstinence. The remains of St. Edmund, now and for centuries the object of great veneration at Pontigny, still lie here behind the high altar. They escaped not only the Huguenots who burnt the church in 1567, but the devastations which overtook such objects throughout France towards the close of 1793. A party of English Roman Catholic pilgrims, under the guidance of Archbishop Manning, visited the church in 1874.

Shorn of its endowments, and the sole remains of a once large and powerful monastic establishment, the church of Pontigny is now but the place of worship of a humble village. Some forty-five years ago subscriptions were invited for its restoration, and it is pleasing to chronicle that our Ecclesiological Society, confessing that differences of time and differences of opinion were no reasons for the neglect by a nation of its historical celebrities, took the matter up earnestly. On this account, therefore, English Churchmen should have a special interest in the church of a religious house which sheltered three prelates so illustrious as Becket, Langton, and St. Edmund of Abingdon.

Such remains of the conventual buildings as exist have been fitted up for the residence of a small body of clergy styling themselves *Pères de St. Edmé*, who possess curious deeds and letters relating to that self-exiled prelate, Robert Grosstête, Oxford and Merton Abbey.

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An avenue of trees leads up to the western door of the church, with its lean-to porch. The nave is destitute of furniture, with the exception of a fine stone screen in the Italian style, just above the west door, and supporting a noble-looking organ, whose brightly burnished pipes, as well as of those of the choir organ in front, stand out in wondrous relief from the rich case. The two easternmost bays of the nave are occupied by the *chorus cantorum* with its finely carved stalls of early eighteenth century date returned at the west end, where the view is closed by a high and close pseudo-classic screen of sham materials surmounted by a crucifix. Above the stalls on either side two large framed paintings conceal the arcades. Iron grilles are carried across the arches opening into the transepts, as well as between the arcades of the eastern limb and of the apse, where the pillars, with their capitals somewhat rudely chiselled, are isolated, and sustain narrow pointed arches, the centremost being blocked by the *châsse* or reliquary containing the remains of St. Edmund. There is no triforium arcade. The absence of this feature, the whiteness of the restored stone, and the plain glass which fills the thickly set windows of the apse clerestory impart an air of great simplicity and sternness, the predominating attributes of a Cistercian building. I notice that the chapels opening out of the aisle have each a stone altar, but very sparsely furnished. In the choir stalls I sit awhile. Such is the awful stillness of the place, broken occasionally by the crowing of cocks and the clucking of hens in the farm-buildings outside the church, as the summer breeze wafts them through the open windows in the transepts, that, somewhat fatigued by the walk, my subsequent researches, and the warmth of the day, "I have an exposition of sleep come upon me." Softly be it spoken, I sink into a gentle doze, from which I am only awakened at twelve o'clock by the deep-toned Angelus booming along the roof, upon which I pull myself together, and, desirous of procuring a few souvenirs of my visit in the shape of photographs, repair to the domestic buildings attached to the church. I ring the bell of the *conciergerie* and state my errand. "The Fathers are at luncheon." Clearly they are, from the clatter of knives, forks, and spoons, and the rattling of crockery-ware which fall upon the ears. "Will Monsieur have the extreme great goodness to call again in half-an-hour?" "With all the pleasure in life," is the reply. So I repair to the somewhat humble inn where I have left my knapsack, and am presently in the enjoyment of a simple meal of bread, cheese, and butter, and hard-boiled eggs, washed down by a little Burgundy, chatting meanwhile with the portly, good-humoured hostess, who stands transfixed with astonishment when I tell her I am walking to Auxerre. "Quoi! à Auxerre à pied! Chansons! ce n'est pas possible!" Nevertheless I gravely inform her that such is the fact.



THE WEST FRONT, PONTIGNY



THE CHOIR, PONTIGNY

PONTIGNY AND AUXERRE

Photographs purchased in the clean parlour of the *conciergerie*, a short gossip with one of the "Pères de St. Edmé," an affable person, who shakes hands and wishes me "bon voyage" in the most pleasant manner, a cup of tea at the inn, which my hostess has all ready for me, a strapping-on of knapsack, and I am on the road to Auxerre, casting many an admiring look back at that simple old Cistercian church, the very earliest specimen of the Pointed Gothic emancipated from the Romanesque element, nestling in a valley standing "thick with corn," and suggesting that well-worn distich :—

Bernardus valles, montes Benedictus amabat,
Oppida Franciscus, celebres Ignatius urbes.

Five miles farther on I reach Montigny le Roi, another small scattered village, in whose Early Pointed one-aisled church—enshrining remains of the earlier building in the shape of rich Romanesque doors and sedilia—I rest for a short time. Anon, the road—never fatiguing, because so diversified—lies through large vineyards, without, however, the picturesqueness of a Kentish hop-garden—and at about half-past four, on arriving at the brow of the last hill, I come once more in sight of my old friend the Yonne, and a little to the left—crowning the slope on its opposite bank, still two miles distant—Auxerre.

Whether approached by road or rail, Auxerre is decidedly prepossessing, and at first sight is reminiscent of that Norman city—Coutances—with its cathedral rising between the two great churches. The Burgundian city, however, has a decided advantage over the Norman one, since it is fortunate in the possession of a fine river—the Yonne—very broad here, and crossed by two substantial bridges.

It is getting on for six o'clock when I arrive at the Pont du Sud. Standing upon it for some moments before wending my way up the steep streets, I am wrapt in admiration of the picturesque scene before me, all steeped in the golden sunlight of early evening. Bordering the river is a pleasant shady boulevard, then come the irregular houses overtopping one another, and, dominating all, the glorious *ci-devant* cathedral, built of a warm tawny stone. A little to the north lies the church of St. Germain, with its lofty apsidal choir, transepts, truncated nave, and isolated Early Pointed spire. Both churches promise a rare architectural treat. Somewhat fatigued, I at once seek my hotel, pleasantly situated in the bustling main street, and, after most refreshing ablutions, do ample justice to an excellent dinner. By the time the meal concludes St. Étienne is shut for the night, so I am obliged to be content with a stroll about its precincts, whose charming peace and seclusion are suggestive of an English cathedral city.

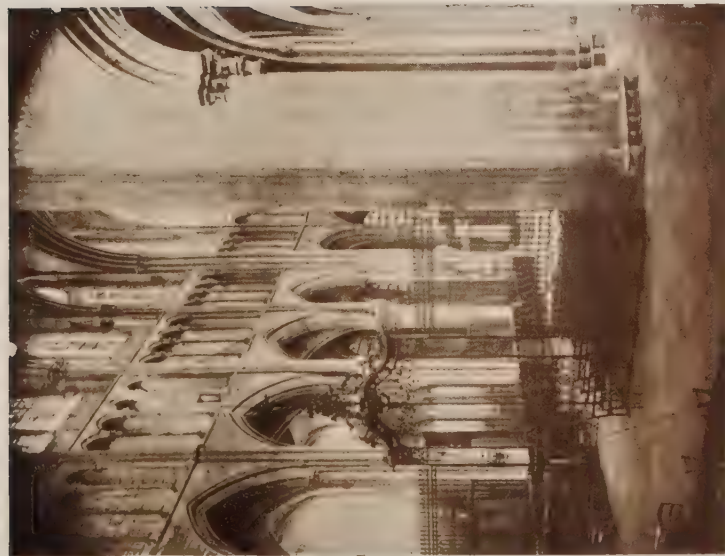
About Auxerre's quaint hilly streets it is extremely enjoyable to wander in

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the sweet air of early morning, entering now and again some solemn church. It is market day, and as early as six o'clock carts of every description, each accompanied by its dog, are rattling over the stony streets of the city, towards the large covered "Halles," laden with country produce. I enjoy the bustling scene around, and above all the sight of the grand old tawny-coloured square north-west tower of the cathedral rising up into the clear blue sky above the houses. Viewed from the market, where the Burgundy peasant women in their cleanest and freshest gowns and white caps, are arranging their wares, and chattering incessantly, it forms a noble object. A charming sight is a continental market.

St. Étienne is glorious, and deeply is it to be regretted that so noble a fane should no longer hold episcopal rank, Auxerre being one of the many sees suppressed at the redistribution of dioceses after the Revolution. In the choir, however, and as usual in the Roman Church, on the Epistle side, the Bishop's throne still remains—a quaint erection of wood—a sort of cross between a summer-house and a four-post bedstead. The mighty fabric itself, the western and transept porches, which seem to invite a world to enter, the great sweeps of jewelled glass, the people, too, using their church as it had always been meant to be used—coming in with their baskets, etc., at one transept door, kneeling for a few moments before the high altar, and passing out at the other; all this strikes the imagination most vividly and ineffaceably. The nave arcades bring to mind some of our English examples, the arch mouldings springing from slender attached shafts, as at Chester, only much loftier. Surmounting the arcade is a triforium, like Worcester, and above, again, a lofty clerestory of four-light Middle Pointed windows, many of which glow with old painted glass. A finely groined roof covers the nave, colour being applied to the bosses and to a small portion of the ribs radiating from these bosses with excellent effect. There is some splendid Early Middle Pointed detail at the west end of the north aisle, just under the great tower, the chapels opening out of the aisles north and south being, in several instances, finely restored specimens of the same style. Others have been sadly tampered with by debased Gothicists. Two windows in the northern range of chapels strike me as particularly good examples of modern French painted glass. Mural painting is represented in these chapels by some very vivid frescoes of full-length bishops, discovered evidently during the restoration of the fabric. One of the chapels in the south aisle of the nave is dedicated to St. Germain, the patron saint of the diocese, who, with St. Loup, rid Britain of Pelagianism. His effigy surmounts the altar, and in the hand is placed a bunch of grapes, doubtless the first-fruits of the vintage.

Standing at the junction of the nave and choir with the transepts, the views presented by the interior of this "Glory of France" are enchanting beyond



LE CHŒUR, ST. ÉTIENNE, AUXERRE



ST. ÉTIENNE, AUXERRE

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description. To the rear is the dusky Middle Pointed nave, with its light graceful arcades; right and left extend the short transepts, each having in its principal face a glorious Flamboyant *rosace*. The groining at the crux beneath which we are standing springs from huge clusters of tall slender shafts, and the eastern arch opens into the thirteenth-century choir—a reservoir of light, a veritable *camera lucida*—notwithstanding the priceless vitreous decoration of which it is the proud possessor—a *lilium excelsum* which, in purity rivalling Coutances and Bayeux, it is a privilege to have seen and studied.

Begun by the fifty-eighth bishop, Guillaume de Seignelay, eight years after his accession to the see, in 1207, the choir of Auxerre is contemporary with those of Tours, Chartres, Soissons, Rouen, Troyes, Angers, Rheims, Beauvais, and a host of other examples which combine to render the century comprised between 1150 and 1250 truly the Augustan age of French architecture. This prelate, as M. l'Abbé Lebeuf tells us in his "*Histoire Ecclésiastique d'Auxerre*,"¹ "Voyant que de tous côtés on rebâtissait les Eglises Cathédrales, il ménagea une somme d'argent pour rebâtir la sienne qui menaçait ruine en quelques endroits. Il fit commencer à détruire l'ancienne, du côté de l'Orient, l'an 1215. . . . On vit avancer considérablement dans l'espace d'un an l'ouvrage de la nouvelle cathédrale."

Some of the piers are cylindrical, with tall foliated capitals; others are composed of several small shafts, but the triforium throughout the choir is uniform, with simple lancet arcades on slender detached shafts. The wall behind, in true Burgundian fashion, not being pierced, an effect of great solidity is obtained. Above this rises a lofty clerestory, one large plate-traceried window of two lights, with a plain circle in the head, serving for each bay. In the apse these circles are cusped, but in a very curious and not altogether pleasing fashion, as my readers will see on referring to Parker's "*Introduction*," the ends of the lobes being turned upwards.

The priceless glass which fills all these great Early Pointed choir windows at Auxerre has been described by abler pens than mine. Much of it is due to Bishop Henri de Villeneuve, who, succeeding Guillaume de Seignelay in the see of Auxerre in 1220, died January 18, 1234, and was the first prelate to find a resting-place in this magnificently reconstructed choir.

To quote once more from L'Abbé Lebeuf's work:—"Quand l'auteur de l'abrégé de sa vie ne dirait pas qu'il enrichit l'Eglise de Saint-Étienne par ses dons et ses bienfaits, les vitrages du Chœur parlent encore en sa faveur. On voit au haut de la grande vitre du fond de l'abside, la figure d'un Agnus Dei, avec un

¹ Vol. i. pp. 339-360.

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étendard, qui est la représentation même du revers de son sceau ou du contre-scel, ainsi qu'elle se voit dans les actes de son temps avec ces mots '*secretum Episcopi*.' Il eut si à cœur l'avancement de l'édifice qu'il impétra que tous ceux qui contribueraient à son avancement seraient participans de tous les biens spirituels du Diocèse." In the sinister light of the central window of the apse is the Crucifixion; in the dexter light, the "Majesty," with a kneeling bishop beneath His feet. The early morning sun is streaming gloriously through this window, staining the floor of the choir with colour, when I pay my first visit to the church.

The separation between nave and choir is effected by a lofty eighteenth-century iron screen and gate, surmounted by a crucifix, so that from the great west doors an uninterrupted view is obtained to the very penetralia of the Lady Chapel.

The cathedral of Auxerre possesses two organs, the great one occupying a somewhat anomalous position in the south-west angle of the south transept. For the benefit of those who are unacquainted with the working of a great continental church, it may be interesting to state that in nearly every one of large dimensions there are two organs—a large one for the Voluntaries and *sorties*; for the interludes played between the Psalms, verses of the Gospel Canticles, and Office Hymns; and for processions; another in the choir to accompany the Plain Chant. The usual place for the great organ is at the west end, as at St. Omer, Dieppe, Rouen (Cathedral, St. Ouen, and St. Maclou), Amiens, Paris, Troyes, Coutances, and Bayeux; and in most instances the cases are very richly carved. In several great churches, however, it is to be found nearer the choir, as at Eu, Laon, Tours, and Rheims, where it occupies the transept; Chartres, Metz, and Strasburg, where it hangs above the nave arches with grand effect; and Bruges, where in more than one church it stands upon the choir screen in a very dignified and English fashion. The great Dom at Cologne possesses but one organ, and that is in the north transept. I have most pleasing recollections of the Offices at Cologne, which are sung daily *in choro*. It was a glorious August afternoon, and the hour of prayer when I entered this the most stupendous Gothic church in Christendom for the first time. Compline was just concluding, and I shall never forget the sonorous voices of the canons and cantors as they rose to the vaulted roof of the choir in the *Nunc Dimittis* and *Salva nos Domine vigilantes*. I remember the great bell, for some reason or other, was booming at the same time, and its continuous tone, heard on the pavement of the cathedral, resembled a gigantic bass diapason pipe, accompanying the Plain Chant.

But I am wandering from Auxerre. From the transept I pass into the choir

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aisles, which, like those of the cathedral and church of St. Jean at Sens, are destitute of side chapels. The Early Pointed French work here is unusually fine. Several of the large plain lancet windows glow with magnificent old glass ; and a door pierced in an exquisitely arcaded wall, just to the left on entering the north aisle, admits to the sacristy, a spacious vaulted chamber, where copes are hanging up, and vestments of the colour for the day lie spread upon the table. Perhaps the gem of Auxerre Cathedral is its Lady Chapel. Square-ended, but vaulted in such a manner as to give it an apsidal appearance, it is entered from the procession path behind the high altar by three stilted arches springing from slender shafts. "Nothing," says one of our most judicious architectural critics, "can be more elegant than the junction of the Lady Chapel with the chevet ; for though this is almost always pleasingly arranged, the design has been unusually successful in this instance. The two slender shafts just suffice to give it pre-eminence and dignity without introducing any feature so large as to disturb the harmony of the whole." The morning sun pouring through the glorious old glass in the eastern triplet of lancets in this Lady Chapel of Auxerre was a sight never to be forgotten.

By this time I begin to feel, with the poet's bird, "the keen demands of appetite" ; so leave the cathedral, intending to return to that happy hunting-ground later on—for I have but half exhausted its mine of architectural interest, some fresh detail or some new point of view interposing to claim the attention at every turn. The way lies through the market, now in full swing, and held partly outside, but chiefly inside, a large covered building. Articles of crockery, hardware, and wearing apparel are displayed externally to the admiring gaze of portly Burgundian dames, to whom shouts an Autolycus, "Voilà vos bas ! Voilà vos fils ! Voilà vos aiguilles ! Achetez ! Mesdames, achetez !" And a peculiar kind of cake, looking for all the world like a piece of petrified sponge, is being carried about in the crowd. Inside the market, the babel of voices and the scene together baffle description. To say nothing of the fish, luscious fruits, and esculent roots, there is the live stock—geese, fowls, turkeys, and ducks, sitting calmly in rows, their feet tied together, and presenting the most pleasant expression of countenance under what must be to them rather trying circumstances.

The churches of Auxerre are on a grander scale and more architecturally valuable than those of Sens. St. Eusebius' is in close proximity to the hotel where I am staying, a fact of which its harsh iron bell ringing for one of the early Masses makes me unpleasantly conscious. Externally the most interesting feature of St. Eusebius' is the octagonal tower and spire in Transition between Romanesque and Pointed, and which in early simplicity and beauty rivals the more widely known twelfth-century ones of Chartres and Vendôme. But

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its effect is ruined by a hideous great chancel which some architect of the Renaissance, probably with the bland intention of rebuilding the whole church in the same miserable style, has raised "cheek by jowl" with it. Those who know Ormskirk in Lancashire and its peculiar western double steeples will have some idea of the picture presented by this spire and chancel at St. Eusebius', Auxerre. The Renaissance architect, whoever he was, has entirely remodelled the choir, and very poor, feeble work it is. Happily, he has left the Transition nave with its lean-to aisles and low clerestory of simple lancets untouched; the north aisle, however, is tolerable Flamboyant. The western façade is quite First Pointed, presenting three plain lancets above a very refined doorway, richly moulded, and with slender shafts bearing foliated caps. The red tiled roofs contribute much to the picturesqueness of St. Eusebius' externally, viewed from the broad *place* in which it stands. Passing to the interior, to which a triforium, clerestory, and vaulted roof impart an air of minster-like grandeur, I find a graceful Transitional nave arcade, on half-columns, some of which have their capitals carved, but varying in design. The bosses of the roof at the meeting of the groins are tastefully relieved with colour and gilding. Under the tower, which, as I have stated, stands just to the north of the chancel, are very plain bold arches. The lantern-like choir of the Renaissance period, although very coarse in detail, is, viewed internally, extremely imposing, and some of its windows have old glass, but the eastern chapel is a miserable imitation of the Lady Chapel in the cathedral, and opens out of the procession path by a triple arcade on ugly attenuated columns, though some old glass masks, in some degree, the badness of the work. The view of the nave from behind the high altar is particularly fine, its massive vaulting being thrown into strange contrast with the inferior work in the choir.

A steeple of similar character to that of St. Eusebius' is found at St. Germain's. Designed with an entasis, this spire stands quite isolated, the old First Pointed structure of which it formed part having given place to the present church. A miniature cathedral in Middle Pointed, it consists of a Lady Chapel, choir, transepts, and nave of only four bays, the rest having been destroyed by the Huguenots. Its great height gives St. Germain's a most imposing air viewed from the river, and were the three or four demolished western bays of the nave extant the internal effect would be materially enhanced.

Entering by the door in the west wall, a wretched affair in that dry, quasi-Gothic school of carpentry which flourished during the early part of the nineteenth century, the aspect presented by the interior of St. Germain's is dignified and interesting. Just inside the door is a railed gallery, from which, on either side, two flights of steps lead down into the body of the church, which is built upon



ST. GERMAIN, PARIS.



THE LADY CHAPEL, ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST, LONDON.

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the declivity of a hill. Unhappily, the extreme whiteness of the stone robs this, and many another French church, of that picturesqueness obtainable by natural polychromy, for beside such churches of our English Midland shires as Worcester Cathedral, St. Mary's and the Abbey Church of Shrewsbury, the Northamptonshire churches of Higham Ferrers, Irthlingboro', and Raunds, built as they are of rich, warm, local sand and iron stones, the majority of French ecclesiastical interiors are cold, relying much, of course, upon the artificial aids of fresco and stained glass. The finest points in the interior of St. Germain's at Auxerre are the light graceful arcades whose arches die into the piers without any capitals, the massive groined roof, and the fenestration of the great transepts, that of the northern one being particularly fine, with a richly traceried rose.

A flight of steps, similar in elevation to that at the west end, admits to either choir aisle from the transepts; from the north transept a door under this flight leads to the crypt, the only portion of the original structure remaining. Of considerable extent, and with its well-preserved paintings on pillars, walls, and roof, it suggests the old Roman catacombs. The part immediately under the high altar in the choir is truly awful. It is quite as much as one can do to stand upright in its little outer aisles, which are separated from the central domed portion by square-headed arcades on pillars with Corinthianising capitals. Here stands the altar of St. Germain, with the figure of that saint over it, enshrined in flowers and evergreens, from which a silver crucifix gleams through the darkness with very weird effect. Emerging from this solemn crypt to the lightsome superstructure, I notice that the high altar is placed just under the eastern arch of the crossing, the stalls being arranged in the choir and apse basilican fashion. A lofty iron gate, of last century's workmanship, surmounted by a crucifix, screens the *chorus* from the nave, now serving as the chapel of the Hôtel Dieu. Against the western wall of the south transept is reared a wooden crucifix of imposing dimensions, and bearing on its base the words "O Crux Ave. Mission 1824," while a large number of pictures and some well-executed Stations of the Cross relieve the general air of coldness prevailing the interior, which, as a whole, recalls the choir of the well-known church in the castle of Mont St. Michel.

St. Pierre's, the third church, is one of those extraordinary buildings met with so frequently on the Continent—a curious combination of Gothic and Italian, but wearing an air of much grandioseness. It stands some little way back from the hilly street leading up from the bridge, and its western façade appears most grand and imposing to the visitor on entering the secluded precincts from beneath a Renaissance gateway, which, although much mutilated, is invested with that lovely colouring which time alone can impart. On the south side of

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the nave, about midway, stands the tower, which, like those at Nevers and Clamecy, is a good example of Flamboyant without any Palladian tendency, the body of the church belonging to the latter part of the seventeenth century, and consisting of a nave and chancel under a continuous roof, aisled and clerestoried. Its regularity renders the interior of St. Pierre's at Auxerre most imposing. There is an arcade of round columns and arches carried right round the apse in a grand sweep, and designed probably in imitation of Transition work, since the pier capitals are Corinthian in character. There is no triforium, a blank space, doubtless intended by its designer for pictorial enrichment, intervening between the arches and the clerestory, whose large three-light windows have coarse tracery in imitation of Flamboyant. A groined roof covers the whole church, so excellent in its workmanship that it is difficult to believe that it belongs to the seventeenth century, and there is a good deal of painted glass in the choir clerestory, rich, but with all the faults characteristic of its class and epoch.

My ecclesiological researches in a measure concluded, a walk along the tree-shaded boulevard by the river brings me back to the *soi-disant* cathedral, where I sit until the Angelus, booming over the city from the great tower, apprises me of the hour of noon. Crossing the market, I find a change in its aspect. Business is practically over, and the "Dames de la Halle" have, to use Sir Walter Scott's favourite expression, "broken the neck of the day's work." Luncheon is in progress, the demolition of various savoury viands occupying the undivided attention of such of the company as remain, and effectually precluding any further display of eloquence.

The sun is now glaring down upon Auxerre through a cloudless blue sky, so I am glad to have got through my morning's work between those pleasantest hours of the day in a continental town, *i.e.* six and twelve o'clock. A siesta succeeds, and then comes tea—looking, by the way, when poured out, something like an infusion of brown paper, as I have forgotten to tell them to make it *à l'Anglaise*, but refreshing nevertheless. A delightful saunter about the city in the cool of the evening is next enjoyed—along the boulevards, by the river, and about the quiet streets in the immediate vicinity of the cathedral, whose deep-toned bell presently announces the *Ave Maria*. A Sister of Charity throws aside the jalousies of a window in a house near the south transept after the heat of the day, and a few devotees are wending their way towards St. Étienne's, to await in some quiet chapel their turn for the Ministry of Reconciliation preparatory to the next day's Mass. Referring to the "Table des Offices pour la Semaine" I see that the Stations of the Cross are to be sung in the cathedral this evening at half-past seven. As the time approaches, I once more repair



THE CHOIR, ST. ÉTIENNE, AUXERRE

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thither. With the last rays of the setting sun steeping the eastern walls of the transepts in richest colours from the painted windows, the interior of Auxerre Cathedral looks most impressive. As I enter by the great northern portal a small procession, consisting of crucifer and taper-bearers, clerks and officiant, issues from the sacristy in the choir aisle, crosses the transept, and is joined on its way to the First Station at the east end of the north nave aisle by the congregation, consisting entirely of women, among whom are several Sisters of Charity and girls in their charge. It is very solemn to see the great processional crucifix borne down the dusky aisle of Auxerre between the two candles. Still more so is the first verse of the *Stabat Mater dolorosa*, which presently breaks upon the ear, sung unaccompanied to a familiar modern French melody—the third one to which this world-renowned Sequence is set in our “Hymns Ancient and Modern.” A short exhortation follows each verse; then comes a low murmuring from the thronging women, anon a pause for silent prayer, and a move towards the next Station while verse number two is sung—

Cujus animam gementem,
Contristatam et dolentem,
Pertransivit gladius,

and so on to the end.

During the singing of the last verse, the high altar is lighted up for “Benediction”; the congregation take their seats under the crux, the little procession enters the choir through the eighteenth-century crucifix-surmounted gate, the officiant assumes a white cope, the glorious old hymns, *O Salutaris Hostia* and *Tantum ergo* are sung to the accompaniment of a trombone, the successor of the “serpent,”¹ the great bell of the cathedral tolls, incense rises in clouds before the old painted glass in the apse which the “shadows of departing day” are rendering less and less distinct, the Host is upraised before the kneeling congregation bent in silent adoration, and this shortest but most beautiful of Roman Catholic Offices ends. Lingeringly we all disperse, and the vast cathedral is left once more silent and deserted.

Another Saturday has come round, and gloriously it breaks over Auxerre. Only a few more hours remain to be spent in this enchanting old city, so I make the most of them, paying another visit to St. Germain's, with its fascinating, awful crypt; to St. Eusebius', where I meet a priest coming out, accompanied by a gardener trundling a wheelbarrow, presumably for flowers; thence to St. Pierre's, and so back to an early *déjeuner à la fourchette* prior to departure. To decide

¹ The musical instrument called the serpent is now all but obsolete in the French cathedrals. It was invented by a canon of Auxerre, one Edmé Guillaume, in 1590. The “Serpent d'Eglise” is, however, still a functionary in Gallican churches, and I remember when at Amiens a few years ago buying the *Semaine Religieuse*, a little “monthly” corresponding to our parish magazine, in which was recorded the death of the “serpentist” of the cathedral at an advanced age.

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whether Sunday shall be spent at Vézelay, with its extraordinary Romanesque and Early Pointed abbey, the pride of Burgundy, illustrations of which in the shop windows at Auxerre are distractingly tempting, or at Troyes, with its five-aisled cathedral and galaxy of churches, is a matter of great difficulty, but the latter gains the day. And very glad I was that it did, for on paying a visit a year subsequently to Vézelay I found but the merest apology for an inn, and the ritual arrangements of the vast abbatial church by no means commensurate with its architectural magnificence, which circumstances, operating together, would hardly have conduced to the spending of a very profitable Sunday from an ecclesiological point of view.

Effects are packed, the omnibus is at the door. Madame and the whole establishment are there to witness its departure and to say "Bon voyage." The driver cracks his whip, and the vehicle is driven at a furious pace down the steep tortuous streets, imperilling the life of a tame jackdaw, and across the bridge to the station. "En voiture pour La Roche, Sens, et Paris!" is the cry. The train glides out of the station, and Auxerre and its churches fade like a beautiful vision, to be conjured up during the foggy days of a London winter.

In due course we arrive at La Roche Junction, where, a short delay occurring before a train can be got on to St. Florentin, it is pleasant to sit by the canal just outside the station and watch the great blue dragon-flies skimming over the water.

Once more I have entrained and soon St. Florentin comes into view, my Alsatian driver of the preceding Wednesday being there with his vehicle, and greeting me on emerging from the station with the politest of bows.

There is leisure, until the departure of the train (from a station in another part of St. Florentin) for Troyes, to visit its grandly-situated church. It is, however, a late and coarse Flamboyant edifice—one of those specimens of Gothic which, though fallen from its high estate, was struggling against that returning Classicism which for the three centuries was so completely to eclipse it—and whose most picturesque external feature is the long flight of steps leading up to the portal of the north transept from the hilly street. A procession with banners and crosses passing up or down this ascent must have an uncommonly picturesque effect. Viewed outside, this church at St. Florentin appears to consist of a lofty apsidal choir and transepts only, but on entering, a low unfinished nave of two unclerestoried bays is presented to the visitor.

Pecuniary considerations or the religious wars doubtless determined the promoters to discontinue their work beyond this point, for a vault, of permanent character, springs from just above the arcades. A gallery, in Italian Corinthian, carried on three round arches between pilasters, supports one of those imposing-looking organs so frequent in France, and masks the bare, hastily-finished west



THE ROOD-LOFT, ST. FLORENTIN

end, whose only relief is a round window, traceried in tolerable imitation of Early French. But the fenestration of either transept is very meagre.

The glory of this truncated church at St. Florentin resides, however, in its fittings, conspicuous among them being the rood-loft and the Early Renaissance screens, which not only enclose the choir, but the chapels surrounding it, and which are perhaps only excelled in beauty and extent by those in the glorious First Pointed Cathedral at Laon.

Besides these interesting *instrumenta* there is some good stall work, an imposing lectern—the strap-like treatment of whose iron work has been laid under contribution by two of the most accomplished architects of the English Gothic revival; a charming little semicircular projection from the eastern side of the *jubé* containing the steps conducting to the loft, and a tall reredos of the Corinthian order. All these are very chaste, and agree remarkably well with the late character of the building, but the appropriateness of an altar shaped like an Egyptian sarcophagus it is difficult to see. The candlesticks and flower-vases are rococo; indeed, it is strange that so many great French churches should retain their high altars of the Louis XV and Early Empire periods, while those in the side chapels are frequently most sumptuous and correct specimens of Revived Pointed work, with exquisitely jewelled tabernacles, predellæ faced with subjects from Scripture or saintly figures; the altars themselves, unprovided with frontals, being seen to rest on small pillars, under which reliquaries, some of them elaborate specimens of *orfèvrerie*, are deposited. Side curtains—very picturesque and devotion-aiding adjuncts—are rarely met with in the French churches, and these, together with rich needlework of any description, are desiderata in the majority of Gallican church sanctuaries, where, as Pugin said, “Catholic antiquity and modern trash are surprisingly contrasted.”

“It is heat and mid-day,” and the streets of St. Florentin are deserted when I pass out into them from the church, intent on taking home some souvenirs of so richly furnished an interior in the shape of photographs. Luckily these are forthcoming, though not without some difficulty, and with one of them I am able to embellish this chapter.

Returning to the hotel for my knapsack I find a little omnibus waiting to convey me to the St. Florentin (Est) station, whence a line had, at the time of my visit, been just open to Troyes, testified to by the gravelly platform and air of stickiness pervading everything.

As this vehicle, whose services I am glad to avail myself of, for it is very dusty and hot, approaches the station, it overtakes two priests tramping along the shadeless road, each armed with his Breviary and an umbrella of Camp-like aspect, and raising clouds of dust at every step.

THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

In the booking-office the clerk is enjoying a siesta, and their reverences, to attract his attention, knock loudly at the as yet unopened pigeon-hole with franc-pieces. However, after the lapse of some minutes we are all furnished with the necessary permits for the voyage, and, according to the ridiculous custom of the country, which I am glad to see is in some places becoming relaxed, are penned up in the *salle d'attente*. The train for Troyes comes puffing in; the priests and some half-dozen market people make a frantic rush for the carriages as soon as the glass doors are thrown open, a great business is made of examining our tickets, and St. Florentin disappears from view.

With the exception of a few country people, who get in at one station and out at another, staring during their sojourn in the carriage at my English touring suit in open-eyed amazement, but who give me a pleasant "Merci, monsieur! Bon jour et bon voyage!" as I assist them in or out with their baskets, the train picks up but few passengers. The line is a most uninteresting one, presenting nothing but a succession of small villages with churches of nondescript character but serving, in some degree, to break the monotony of the journey from St. Florentin to Troyes, into which the train runs with laudable punctuality at two o'clock. Lying as it does in a level country, with undulations indeed, but not such as detract from that general aspect or character so well expressed by the term Champagne, the appearance of the old capital of the province is somewhat disappointing on a first approach, for although stocked with churches there is hardly a steeple of dimensions sufficiently imposing to denote the wealth of ecclesiastical art contained within it.

It is hot, very hot in Champagne to-day, notwithstanding its invigoratingly refreshing nomenclature, and right glad am I, after securing quarters in proximity to "the most enchanting spectacle which the genius of man has bequeathed to successive ages"—the church of St. Urbain—to escape from heat and glare into its cool recesses, and subsequently into those of the cathedral, whose mighty western doors, thrown back to their utmost width, reveal stained-glass windows in which the positive tinctures flash from white grounds with jewel-like brilliancy.



ST. JEAN, TROYES

CHAPTER XVI

A SUNDAY AT TROYES.

TO wake up at six o'clock on Sunday morning and to see glorious Old Sol tinging the peaks of some antique gables opposite is truly delightful. But this is nothing compared with the subsequent pleasure of inhaling the sweet air of early morning as it is wafted through streets of old timbered houses from the vast tract of environing country, or while treading the mazes of that most delightful of lounges, a French flower market. Thus, interspersed with an occasional dive into a church or two, where the white-chasubled priests move softly to and fro before the altar in the stillness of the early morning Mass, the time glides most delightfully away.

The Troyes churches cluster almost as thickly as those in Cologne. If not of the highest order architecturally, being chiefly in a very bold Flamboyant style peculiar to this district of Champagne, they have contrived to retain a good deal of their seventeenth-century furniture, and the picturesqueness imparted to many of them by their high open-backed benches is refreshing after the Parisian smartness which is the besetting sin of too many great French churches. Not a few are rich in Late stained glass, stone and wood carving, of what may be called "l'école Troyenne."

In succession I visit St. Jean's, remarkable for its altar-piece and lofty clerestoried choir—a choir rising clear above the houses which, like the snails at Mrs. Pipchin's, cling with the tenacity of cupping-glasses to places they are not expected to ornament. The former is embellished with the painting by Mignard, a native artist, of Our Saviour's Baptism, usually kept veiled, but to-day, being Dies Dominica, disclosed for the delectation and elevation of the faithful. Here, as in several others of the Troyes churches, the window tracery resembles that debased Perpendicular work which once filled many of the windows in Chester Cathedral.

St. Nizier, St. Remi, the possessor of the only spire in Troyes, St. Pantaléon, and La Madeleine, before whose unique early sixteenth-century rood-loft—"a curtain of lace cut in marble"—I spend some time lost in admiration, all in some

THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

point or other challenge the attention. Such was the confidence of the author of the Madeleine screen in his work that he rests beneath its unsupported mass, "sans craindre d'être écrasé."

The transepts and short nave of the Madeleine are very Early First Pointed, the apsidal choir Flamboyant, but neither is a good example of its style. Very charming is St. Nicholas', whose western stone gallery, approached by a picturesque flight of steps, may have inspired the gifted architect of St. Agnes', Kennington.

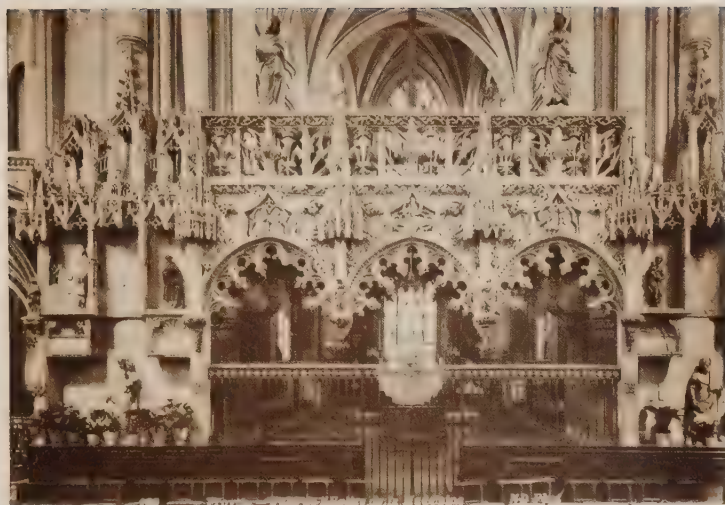
At length I stand before St. Urbain's, its gracefully contoured Middle Pointed chevet profiled against a sky of purest cobalt. Eagerly I pass through the portals, and the impression of the early morning sun streaming through the storied panes of the lantern-like apse, throwing the choicest hues upon the surrounding stonework, is one which can never be effaced from the tablets of memory.

Begun in 1262 by Pope Urban IV, son of a shoemaker of Troyes, on the site of his father's workshop, this graceful church for more than 600 years remained but a fragment,¹ consisting only of a choir, transepts, and the lower part of the nave with its portals, "thanks to some contumacious nuns who had sufficient power and influence, even in those days, to thwart the designs of the Pope himself." It is in its details that the beauty of St. Urbain resides, its chief defect being a certain exaggerated temerity of construction. Indeed, as M. Viollet-le-Duc observes, "c'est certainement la dernière limite à laquelle la construction de pierre puisse atteindre, et comme composition architectonique, c'est un chef d'œuvre."

"Le plan de l'église de St. Urbain est champenois," says the same authority, but does not its tall aisleless apse recall, to those conversant with the German Complete Gothic style, the "Hallen-Kirchen" met with in such cities as Münster, Soest, Halberstadt, and Erfurt, due, I opine, to the proximity of Champagne to Teutonic soil? Several of the Châlons and Toul churches exhibit similar Germanisms, and at Dijon the apses, both of St. Benigne and Notre-Dame, are without aisles. Historically considered, St. Urbain is most valuable, being one of the few large late thirteenth-century churches built in France which fill up the gap left between the earlier phase of the Middle Pointed style and the Flamboyant, into which French architecture so quickly degenerated.

Towards nine o'clock I repair to the majestic cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul to assist at the Morning Offices. With its great western façade I am somewhat disappointed, having formed an exaggerated idea of its Flamboyant voluptuous-

¹At the time of my visit to Troyes the erection of the nave was being rapidly proceeded with, and must ere now be completed.



ROOD-LOFT IN THE MADELEINE, TROVES



THE GALLERY, ST. NICHOLAS, TROVES

A SUNDAY AT TROYES

ness from an engraving in Arnaud's "Voyage dans le Département de l'Aube," and from Bourassé's glowing description in his "Cathédrales de France," for, like too many productions of its age—the sixteenth century—it wears a painfully incomplete, inharmonious aspect, detail of the most gorgeous character contrasting disagreeably with wall-spaces absolutely bald, and the north-west tower is tame indeed.¹

But the interior of Troyes Cathedral—although its early thirteenth-century choir, rebuilt some forty years ago under M. Viollet-le-Duc,² lacks the dignity and expansion of certain other great examples—is as picturesque as any. This quality is due mainly to the double aisles on either side of the nave and part of the choir, and to its wealth of mediæval painted glass, which not only fills the windows of the apse, where the Geometrical tracery is so thin that it looks a mere framework for the vitreous decoration, but the Early and Late Middle Pointed ones of the nave, clerestory, and aisles, in the latter of which the *fleur-de-lis* forms an interesting feature in the tracery.

Troyes has round its procession path five shallow hexagonally apsidal chapels with lancet windows, and is one of the few great French churches planned with double aisles to both nave and choir. In the latter, however, these double aisles are co-extensive only with the first three bays, after which the internal one is alone prolonged round the apse. The nave and its double aisles have magnificent groups of clustered shafts, with those capitals minutely chiselled into natural foliage characteristic of the Later Decorated period, the arcades, in several points, challenging comparison with that on the south side of the nave at Worcester. While the matutinal office of Tierce is being chanted, *senza organo*, in the choir, I stroll about these glorious aisles of Troyes, and dwell upon the magnificent old glass which enriches them.

"I lift mine eyes, and all the windows blaze
With forms of Saints and Holy Men who died,
Here martyred and hereafter glorified:
And the great Rose upon its leaves displays
Christ's Triumph, and the angelic roundelays."

One peculiarity I notice throughout this magnificent cathedral, and that is the glazed triforium stage—one of frequent occurrence in foreign buildings of

¹ An engraving of the western façade of Troyes Cathedral, after a drawing by Silvestre, in the *Mirror of May*, 1824, shows it with a pair of towers, this magnificent building's interior being very cursorily dismissed in the accompanying letterpress as "neat and venerable in appearance."

Less excusable is the meagreness of Doran's notes on this city of churches in the *Gentleman's Magazine* twenty years later, the writer merely alluding to their neglected condition without even mentioning the five-aisled cathedral, St. Urbain, or the rood-loft of the Madeleine.

² In Taylor and Nodier's "Voyages," a view is given of the interior of Troyes Cathedral as it appeared in 1844, with the great piers of the crossing alarmingly out of the perpendicular.

this style, St. Ouen at Rouen, Tours, Strasburg, Nevers, and Metz, affording instances. At Troyes some of the vitreous decoration in the triforium has been removed for repair and its place supplied temporarily by red brick, with an effect far from unpleasing.

During the progress of the Office above alluded to, people begin to arrive for "La Grande Messe de dix heures." Ladies are, as usual in French churches, in the ascendant. "Monsieur est Catholique, mais il ne pratique pas." What a contrast to Germany with the naves of Cologne, Münster, Cleve, Xanten, Soest, or Paderborn, crowded, as I have seen them, to suffocation, and chiefly with men, at the mid-day *Sing Amt*. As I take my place in a chair, one of an empty collection very much at my service, a bell tinkles. The six tall candles on the high altar are lighted, the organ in the choir gives the intonation, and to that Plain-Song melody of which one never seems to tire, the *Asperges me, Domine*, is chanted, as the officiant upon whom the duty devolves bears the holy water down the nave, attended by a little flaxen-haired acolyte in crimson cassock and lace-edged cotta upon which the sweeps of jewelled glass occasionally throw some brilliant hues. Again the bell tinkles. The player on the great organ at the west end flourishes in the key of E minor. A crucifix, flanked by a pair of candles, gleams in the dusky southern choir aisle, and in honour of St. Loup—a saint of much local celebrity—a procession, headed by the Suisses, resplendent in knee breeches, crimson stockings, buckled shoes, grandly embroidered coat, and cocked hat, passes round the *pourtour* of the choir, chanting to a memory-haunting Gallican melody one of the sublimest hymns in the range of mediæval psalmody—

Iste Confessor Domini, colentes
Quem pie laudant populi per orbem,
Hac die lætus meruit beatas
Scandere sedes,

a hymn for the Feast of Confessors, whose irregularity of metre has precluded its rendering into truly graceful English to suit the proper Plain-Song melody. The compilers of the "Hymnal Noted"—to whom we cannot owe a sufficient debt of gratitude—attempted its translation in the early days of the great ecclesiological revival (1848—60) but their work has the brilliance yet stiffness of a gem, while the verses of the Latin poet resemble the soft dewy freshness of a flower.

Between each verse the player of the great organ at the west end of the cathedral takes up the strain, and improvises upon it in a manner thoroughly French. Sometimes the tones of the instrument shake the pavement beneath the feet; sometimes they feel full of passionate pleading; anon, they trip measurefully along, or flash out in sudden brilliance, like a fountain springing upward and tossing the sunlight from its myriad drops.



THE CATHEDRAL LOOKING EAST, TROVES

A SUNDAY AT TROYES

The Introit proper for the day concluded, the organ breaks out again into a delightful interlude by way of relief to its severe Plain Song, and to that of the *Kyrie*, suggesting the contrast between Corinthian and Doric, or between Flamboyant and Lancet. This morning at Troyes the music is what is known among ourselves as the "Missa de Angelis," wherein occurs one of the most beautiful pieces of Plain-Song writing I know, viz. the Amen of the *Credo*. All adjourn to the nave for the sermon, which must have had a spiritualising effect, for a rich vein of copper lines the alms-bag when it is suavely handed to me by a surpliced canon. Coppers, too, are rained down from hands *bien gantées* when all is over into the tin mugs of beggars who, continental fashion, infest the principal approaches to this cathedral, to call down the morning smile of pity.

The afternoon is spent in attending the Chapter Offices, which begin as soon as the Alsations have concluded their service in a chapel opening out of the north transept. This time I take a chair in the *pourtour* of the choir, and dwell upon the glorious painted effigies of saints in the windows of the clerestory.

At Vespers *Iste Confessor* is again sung as Office Hymn just before the *Magnificat*. Then comes a delightful stroll through the "Champagne" country environing the city, the distant line of hills, as twilight falls, putting on a lovely violet hue.

Inspection of sundry old village churches, which, with their countrified fittings, are a perfect revelation to the ecclesiologist, creates an agreeable diversion, and as darkness falls Troyes is regained, while the curfew rings from the isolated belfry of one of those large plain Flamboyant edifices common in this part of Champagne, and whose interior, viewed at this hour, wears an appearance truly awful and impressive.

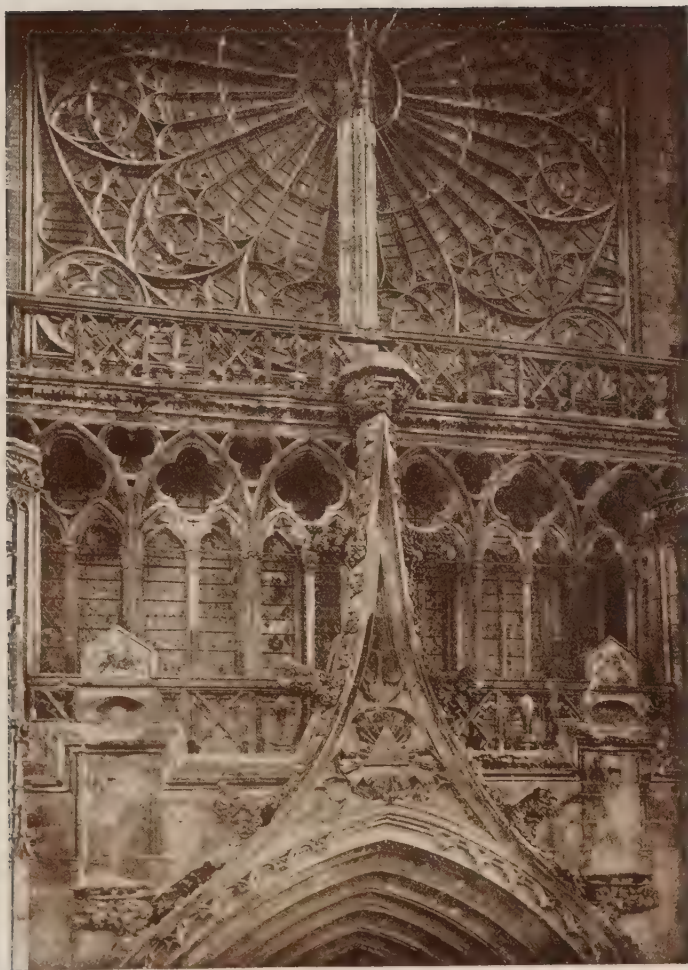
Returning to the cathedral on Monday morning, after another protracted ramble about the city, I find the canons in the choir reciting the Offices of the Breviary in monotone. Mass is said by one of them in lace alb and rich crimson chasuble. Sext follows. During its progress the verger is busied with preparations for a funeral. A black frontal is placed upon the high altar, and a cope of the same colour is hung in readiness on a stand near the sacristy door. At the conclusion of Sext, I request one of the cantors, who is to sing the music incidental to the obsequies, to show me the music of the Office Hymn sung yesterday. With much politeness he repairs to the vestry, situated in the south aisle of the nave, and returns with a *Paroissien*. Hurriedly pointing out the place, he is obliged to take his station in the little procession, which I see is just emerging from the south choir aisle. It consists of the crucifer and taper-bearers, the cantors and the officiating priest. They all leave the cathedral by

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the great portal of the north transept, and wend their way along the streets to the house of the deceased. I follow them. Very picturesque is this little procession, with the sun flashing on the silver crucifix and the white surplices. Returning with the mourners and friends, all on foot, some lugubrious chanting begins, and is continued till the west door of the cathedral is reached. During the removal of the remains from the hearse the officiant walks up the nave, and assuming the black cope meets the funeral train at the entrance to the choir. The preliminary Office over, the priest retires, returning shortly in a chasuble of black with silver orphreys, and accompanied by the deacon and sub-deacon. The Mass begins; no organ is used, but a violoncello gives richness to the Plain Chant about which there is a pleasing and soothing monotony, agreeably diversified by the Sequence *Dies Irae*, which, knowing it by heart, I am able to follow note by note. It is not a little diverting to watch the friends, the male members of whom—accommodated with stalls in the choir, but like the young Mac-Stingers, “knowing little about the ceremony and caring less”—slip out to a contiguous café.

As Troyes Cathedral is one of the “Glories of France,” so are the great transeptal roses its more peculiar “Glories.” Dating from the first quarter of the fourteenth century, they show us this particular form of fenestration in the meridian of its lustre; indeed, the Complete Gothic style has produced no more graceful conceptions than the traceries of these windows. Each rose is set in a square, the upper horizontal line of which is supported by a multangular pillaret, prettily capped by triangular canopies crocketed and mounting up to a pinnacle—a charming external feature, but a somewhat obstructive one viewed from within.

Seated in the nave, I note the deterioration in its style as the work advances westward, apparent chiefly in the fifth pier separating the double aisles, and in the sixth, on either side the nave. In the choir, the columns supporting the very much stilted but obtusely pointed arches of the apse, are cylinders, having a very slim pillar in front and on the side facing the procession path. The remaining choir piers—which, by the way, have modern Early Pointed stone screens fixed between them—are composed of a cluster of shafts, while those separating the internal choir aisle from the outer one are noble octagonal masses. So varied an assemblage of columns, viewed from the transepts, is, I need hardly say, exceedingly striking.



THE NORTH TRANSEPT, TROYES



III. NORTH DOOR OF THE CATHEDRAL, CHALONS

CHAPTER XVII

CHÂLONS-SUR-MARNE

BY mid-day the last walk has been taken round the columned aisles of Troyes Cathedral, and I have closed the western door of that "dim and mighty minster of old time" with a regretful sigh. I am comforted, however, with the reflection that glories equalling those I am now quitting await me at Châlons—reached after a journey across a Champagne country whose monotony is relieved by occasional dips into some of those delightful Thackerayesque "Roundabout Papers," Murray's "capital" hand-book, or a volume of Albert Smith, who always reads well abroad.

There is a grand turn out at Châlons-sur-Marne, where several omnibuses from the hotels are drawn up in the station yard. I mount the box of that belonging to the strangely nomenclatured Hôtel de la Haute Mère de Dieu, which vehicle after dawdling about the station precincts for a considerable period, in the hope of catching a priest or two—numbers of whom are arriving by branch trains for the prize-giving at one of the Lycée's in the city—starts for town, much to my satisfaction and that of the solitary "inside," who had been informed that it was "going directly."

Rattling over the bridge and past the cathedral of St Étienne—far finer, by the way, than books or common report had led me to expect—I catch a glimpse of the metal spires of Notre-Dame as the vehicle sharply turns the corner by St. Alpinus, where a curtain waving in the western door has quite an Italian air; and so dismount at the hostel, where Monsieur and Madame, as in all well-regulated establishments, are waiting to receive me as though I had written to announce my arrival a week beforehand. Ushered to a pleasant airy bedroom commanding a view of the cathedral, and looking into an acacia-shaded courtyard, I lose no time in hastening towards such a combination of attractions, and, as a preliminary, take a refreshing "dish of tea." Then, with the agreeable sensation that one need not begin work till the morrow, I visit the churches with which Châlons is so richly stored, each in its turn.

Although inferior ecclesiologically to the church of Notre-Dame, the cathedral

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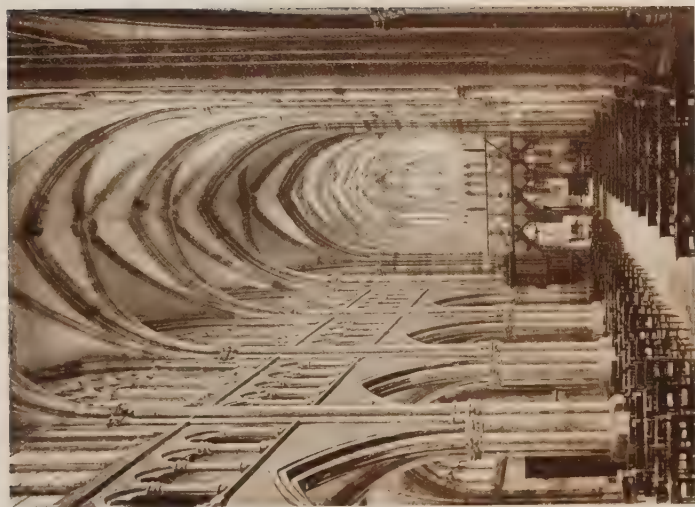
of St. Étienne—a very favourite French dedication—impresses me deeply by its simple, solemn grandeur. Standing with the whole of its northern side thrown open to the main street, with a prettily laid out flower-garden in front, the noble array of Geometrical Decorated windows in aisle and clerestory is seen to great advantage. No doubt the exterior suffers much from want of a proper western façade, the present one being an abrupt Italian work of the seventeenth century, erected after a fire which did much damage, necessitating repairs and additions in the taste of the age. The oldest portions are the towers, which, Teutonic fashion, stand to the east of the transepts.

There is much in the disposition of the plan of Châlons Cathedral that brings Westminster to mind—the grandly exposed north side of which I have already spoken; the entering by the north transept door, and finding the poorly-stalled *chorus cantorum* arranged in the eastern part of the nave, and on the left the short apsidal choir with its encircling chapels. After five-aisled Troyes the nave of Châlons looks narrow, but this impression wears off after a visit or two, and the eye soon dwells contentedly on the grand unbroken and lofty arcade of German-looking round columns, with their foliated capitals, and upon the superb series of windows in the aisles, which, *mirabile dictu*, do not open here into chapels of a later age.

From the cathedral I go to Notre-Dame, without doubt the noblest specimen of Early Pointed France can show, wonderfully little damaged by time, showing few or no additions in subsequent styles, and singularly fortunate in having been restored under the care of a true ecclesiologist, M. le Curé Champenois, about forty years ago. Like that of the cathedral, the choir—the shortest in France, I believe—is flanked just east of the transepts by steeples, and there is another pair surmounted by leaden spires at the west end. In their incomplete state, these eastern towers have a grand and massive effect, taken in conjunction with the boldly sweeping apse and the circumambient chapels.¹ Excellent taste characterises all the fittings of this noble church, and the modern stained glass by Lusson deserves the highest praise.

The other Châlons churches have their especial points of interest. St. Alpinus, with its long Early Pointed nave and low central tower pyramidically capped, looks well over the tops of the houses in the large *place*. St. Loup, Middle Pointed, has an elongated and Teutonic-looking choir with lofty windows, all glowing with rich modern glass. St. Jean, with its narrow Romanesque nave, its transepts, with an eastern aisle to each, affording lovely perspective views, and

¹The façade of the south transept, with the tower rising just to the east, strongly recalls the south-east one at our own glorious Canterbury.



INT. MARIE DE L'ÉPINE, NEAR CHALONS



THE WEST FRONT, STE. MARIE DE L'ÉPINF



INTERIOR OF THE CATHEDRAL, CHALONS

CHÂLONS-SUR-MARNE

its deep square-ended chancel in Early Pointed, approached by flights of steps, leaves a most profound impression.

On the following day I get all my church-hunting over by noon, and rest, as I have a pilgrimage to make in the evening to the celebrated Ste. Marie de l'Epine,¹ situated about five miles to the east of Châlons, and built in honour of an image of the Virgin and Child which was disclosed in a luminous vision to two shepherds of the village of Ste. Marie, which then occupied the site. From the café in front of Notre-Dame, whose western front is bathed in the rich afternoon sunlight, I start for Epine, and, being in good form, enjoy the five-mile walk exceedingly, the road lying high with a vast extent of level country on either hand as far as eye can see. It is about half-past six when I perceive the graceful spires of Ste. Marie facing me at the end of the road—memorable for that journey undertaken in the June of 1791 by the Royal family of France, in quest of escape from the daily thickening difficulties of their position, but which only terminated at Varennes in unutterable misery, ignominious return to Paris, imprisonment a year after in the gloomy Temple, and for some of the party, the scaffold.

While making the circuit of the exterior the bell begins to toll, and knowing from experience that this is the signal for closing the church, I hasten round to the west entrance, just inside which I encounter the *custodienne* and a Sœur de la Charité. And here I meet with a specimen of true French politeness; for instead of showing signs of impatience and annoyance by jangling keys and slamming doors, the Sister and the—what shall I call her?—the “*vergeress*”—betake themselves to seats, and, while awaiting my leisure, engage in private devotion.

But rules must be obeyed, and twenty minutes having sped by in admiration of this lovely creation of the fourteenth century, which, built of white stone streaked here and there with brown, looks as though formed out of alabaster, the elderly female advances quietly up the south aisle, kneels for a few minutes before the quaint image of the Blessed Virgin and Child, enshrined amid flowers and tapers, beneath the exquisitely beautiful open stone *jubé*, and presently whispers, “Sir, it is time to close the church.” I, of course, rise to go, and during the purchase of a few souvenirs, apologise to the good Sister for detaining her so long beyond the ordinary hour of closing. With the customary courtesies we part, I to walk back to Châlons, towards which I am but half-way when some

¹ Commenced towards the middle of the fourteenth century, this is one of the most graceful churches on a moderate scale that France can show in a mingling of the Geometrical and Flowing Decorated periods. One of our most accomplished lady writers of travel has compared the light open spires to handfuls of wheat bound together.

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ominous-looking black clouds put in an appearance. But no rain comes. "I wish it would," remarks a carter who gives me a "Good-night" as he jogs on his way to the hamlet I have just quitted. Still, I am not sorry when I regain the city, with its paved streets, gas-lamps, and policemen.

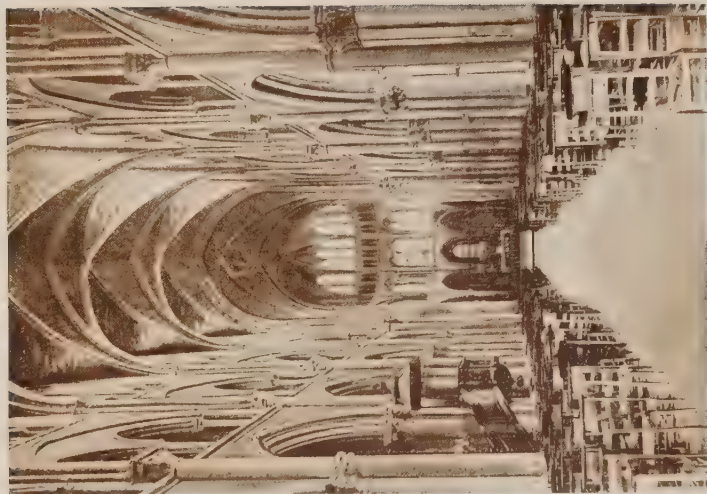
It is pleasant, a year later, when *en route* for Dijon and Autun, to find that trains permit one for a few hours to renew acquaintance with the architectural glories of Châlons. I revisit the cathedral, spending a considerable time in its solemn nave, so Anglican from absence of side chapels, so Teutonic with its tall round columns, so pleasing altogether from its simplicity. Over a confessional in the northern choir aisle I read, "Deutscher und französischer Beicht-Vater," while a printed notice near the north transept entrance sets forth the information that an "Instruction" in German would be given on Saturdays in St. Joseph's Chapel, near the college. Significant, this.

From the cathedral I stroll on to Notre-Dame, where I find a priest catechising a score or so of small children seated on chairs at the west end of the nave. One of their number, a little boy expelled from the class, doubtless for bad behaviour, is kneeling all by himself on the stones in the central passage. The instant I set foot in the church forty small eyes turn inquisitively upon me, following me whithersoever I go. But the excitement culminates when, in the course of inspection, I pass round to where all the little people are gathered about their pastor. "Enfants! attention, s'il vous plaît," cries the priest, slapping his book on the chair-ledge in front of him, "et ne regardez pas ce monsieur-là!" But without much effect, for I still continue to be "the observed of all observers," until I deem it prudent to conceal myself in the dusky recesses of one of the apsidal chapels. A year later, on entering a German Protestant church at Dortmund under much the same circumstances, I met with a totally different reception. In fact, I was motioned to the door by the irate "pastor," or whatever he styled himself.

Few French churches have passed under a more quiet and conservative restoration than this noble Transitional one of Notre-Dame at Châlons-sur-Marne, owing to the jealous care of the aforementioned curé, M. Champenois, whose acquaintance Mr. Street made while on a tour in this part of France about the year 1857. "Here," writes that eminent architect, "I made the acquaintance of M. Champenois, a charming little enthusiast who is busy restoring the whole church. He has cleaned and restored the interior completely, showing all the stone in the groining, and it looks so well. I told him my name, and he was quite up to all about the Lille competition, the more by token that Clutton and Burges's design was to a great extent (as I saw directly and as he told me) a copy of his church."



THE EAST END OF NOTRE-DAME, CHALONS



THE NAVE OF NOTRE-DAME, CHALONS

CHÂLONS-SUR-MARNE

This refers to the competition, open to the architects of Europe, for the erection of the church of Notre-Dame de la Treille at Lille. The design furnished by Messrs. Clutton and Burges was placed first; that of Mr. Street second—a fact quite sufficient to prove the infinite superiority of our architects (travelled and cultured men) over those of the Continent at that period (1855-57). It is almost needless to say that this competition resulted in nothing but waste of time and the ultimate selection of a French architect. Mr. Street's design, which lies before me as I write—a most masterly conception—bore the motto "*Quam dilecta tabernacula Tua, Domine virtutum.*" It was an unmistakable French church, and rigidly observant of the strictest interpretation of the conditions of the competition.

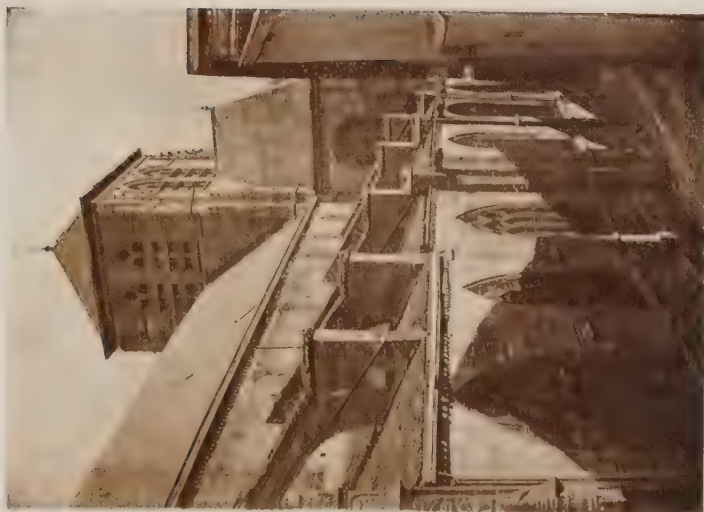
Notre-Dame at Châlons-sur-Marne belongs to that grand group of churches which shed a lustre upon the last half of the twelfth century, truly an Augustan age in the annals of French ecclesiology—an age which produced Mantes and Laon, Chartres and Soissons, Saint Leu and Noyon, and at home the glorious choir of Canterbury, the transepts of Ripon, and the Round of the Temple Church—an age in which the ruder Romanesque was about to lose itself in the grace of the Early Pointed.

Its quadruple division into arcades, lofty triforium of two pointed arches springing from a slender shaft with an unpierced tympanum, a smaller triforium of lancet arcades, and a clerestory of tripled lancets of equal height, impart a grander appearance to the inside of Notre-Dame at Châlons than is at first suggested by its somewhat heavy and German exterior. Of far greater interest than the cathedral, which has suffered much from incendiary causes and injudicious repairs consequent upon them, Notre-Dame may be taken as a typical French church of the earliest Pointed period, and in many features bears a great resemblance to St. Remi at Rheims. In plan and design the apses of the two churches are similar, and though that of Notre-Dame is on a smaller scale, the triple tier of windows, large single-light ones in the chapels, and tripled lancets of uniform height in triforium stage and clerestory; the large plain semi-circular flying buttresses, looking like the quadrants of a circle; and the neatly planned choir and circumambient aisle roofs, are features common to both buildings. Its undisturbed plan and the presence of but few late additions or insertions are all elements conducing to place Notre-Dame at Châlons very high among French churches of the second class. Perhaps its most singular external features are its western steeples flanking a typical Early French Gothic front with three broad lancets and a rose above, like Chartres. Of the spires which surmount the towers, that on the south is a remarkably curious but graceful specimen of lead-work, very lofty, having four tall pinnacles growing out of it at its base, and a

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cluster of eight spire-lights—one to each face—about midway up. Very precious, too, is this south-west leaden spire of Notre-Dame at Châlons as affording evidence of the extraordinary extent to which decoration was carried in the Middle Ages. The northern spire is a copy, and it has been proposed to raise similar ones on the pair of Romanesque towers flanking the one-bayed eastern limb, but from the shortness of the church they would have too much the effect of reducing all to the dimensions of mere turrets, a result by no means desirable; at any rate if one may judge from a drawing of the church, as “proposed to be restored,” which appeared about the year 1851.

A large Flamboyant porch protects the noble but sadly mutilated south portal—a very elaborate specimen of Romanesque work, from which there is a descent of several steps into the church, necessitated by its being built upon ground sloping gradually from south to north. During his visit to Notre-Dame at Châlons, Mr. Street, in the course of conversation with its devoted curé, touched upon the choral arrangements. “Concerning which,” wrote the future architect of St. John’s, Torquay, St. Mary Magdalene, Paddington, and St. John the Divine, Kennington, “he is heterodox. How curious to find a French priest, actively engaged in church restoration, arguing in favour of singing in a western gallery, and of admitting the ‘faithful’ into the choir, and I, an Anglo-Catholic, protesting against both! Yet so it was. However, we parted excellent friends.”



ALPINUS, CHALONS



THE WEST FRONT, NOTRE-DAME, CHALONS

CHAPTER XVIII

CHAUMONT AND LANGRES

I LINGERED so long in Notre-Dame that there was no time to revisit the other churches with which the city of Châlons is richly stored. I was especially sorry not to have had another peep at St. Jean, with its long, square-ended English-looking choir, but I knew that if I was to sleep at Langres the same evening, breaking the long journey at Chaumont for an hour, I must quit such a combination of attractions without further delay, for time and trains, French ones especially, are proverbially unaccommodating. So after some refreshment in the buffet, the railway porters now and again announcing the departure of trains for all sorts of delightful places—Rheims *inter alia*—I was once more rushing through Champagne, with its apparently interminable plains, streaked here and there with chalky roads stretching away to bournes unknown. Glimpses were caught of the Marne every now and then athwart the trees, and when the train ran into Joinville, whose beautiful First Pointed spire has been scraped and patched into smugness and smartness more tragic than utter ruin, I recalled the passage in one of Diderot's letters to Mlle. Volland:—"Joinville, dont la Marne arrose le pied, fait un fort bel effet. C'est une bonne compagnie cette rivière; vous la perdez; vous la retrouverez, pour la perdre encore, et toujours elle vous plait; vous marchez entre elle et les plus beaux coteaux."

Chaumont has a delightful church, forming, as in hundreds of other French towns, almost the only object of interest. On leaving the railway station you walk through the regulation "Place," with its cafés, etc., and along an "Avenue de la Gare" to a species of public garden formed on the edge of a plateau. Below, on a gentle slope, the town, with its straggling streets dominated by the parish church, its small twin slate-covered spires flanking an Early Pointed west front, lay basking in the afternoon sun. A somewhat abrupt descent to the right from this public garden leads into the hilly streets of the little town, and for a few minutes you lose sight of the spires; but they are close by, for presently, after some tortuous windings, you come upon the church's southern portal, at whose graceful appearance, strongly recalling parts of St. Urbain at Troyes, it is quite impossible to refrain from rapturously exclaiming. Indeed, at first sight I

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took it for a most delicate piece of Middle Pointed wood-carving. Its entrance is in three divisions. The central arch, which is widest, has eight cusps, and the fact of each cusp being, so to speak, subcusped, imparts more than ordinary richness to the composition. The side arches are narrower, but all are surmounted by triangles in lieu of the ordinary-shaped arches. The inner door, too, is exceedingly beautiful. Its arch, springing from four shafts, encloses in its tympanum a carving of the Baptism, with scenes from the life of "the Great Forerunner of the Morn" in a frieze below. Some graceful ringed shafts support the arch of the western door, whose tympanum is enriched with a conventional carving in wood of the "Majesty" within a vesica, and surrounded by the Evangelistic symbols. The large four-light window of this front is bricked up, a somewhat common method of procedure in France, probably on account of the organ which almost invariably occupies the western gallery.

Internally, Chaumont Church presents an Early Pointed nave, extremely rich in detail, transepts and a Flamboyant choir of far inferior interest. The piers, slender round ones, coupled, but divided by the vaulting shafts, have very delicately chiselled capitals. There is no triforium, a blank space intervening between the tops of the arches and the single lancet-lighted clerestory. The great width of the aisles, from which Flamboyant chapels open out, is a remarkable feature.

In the otherwise uninteresting choir, of the poorest, latest, and thinnest Gothic, you see one of those attempts to excite attention by novelty which so often led to the corruption of taste, for when the last point of beauty had been attained, the next resource was the wonderful. I refer to the disproportioned corbels employed here in lieu of bosses, uncomfortable-looking things, hanging down and investing you with an idea that they ought to drop. Instances of these pendant corbels occur in many Late Flamboyant churches of Normandy and Brittany. The eastern chapels of St. Pierre at Caen, interesting specimens of the early Renaissance, present examples of these ornaments.

The pulpit, by Bouchardon *père*, displays exquisitely carved foliage, the confronting *banc d'œuvre* being from the same hand, with a canopy supported by four Composite columns. A Holy Sepulchre in one of the northern aisle chapels, with eleven coloured figures, is of Italian workmanship, and belongs to the middle of the fifteenth century; while the north transept presents a charming spiral staircase, an embellishment in which architects of the earlier and better Flamboyant epoch so excelled.

Besides St. Jean, Chaumont possesses another church—one of those buildings in the Early Renaissance style which Jesuit influence sowed broadcast all over France during the seventeenth century. Rich in detail and picturesque as a

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whole, an inspection of two or three such structures is quite sufficient. I did not therefore regret the want of time which prevented my seeking the key of this one at Chaumont, which, as it belongs now to a lycée, is not accessible to the general public.

Once again I was in the train and speeding on towards Langres, not sorry to come in sight of that airily situated cathedral city about five o'clock. Another short railway journey, this time by the Chemin de Fer de Crémallière (the only one in France, I believe), remained to be tried; so in company with the inevitable priest, a soldier, and an old lady, I took a seat in one of the cars, open at the sides but covered on top like the Rheims tramways, and was soon whisked up the steep hill upon which Langres stands. A poodle, shaved in the most approved fashion, was of the party, comporting himself in a gentlemanly manner. Putting his forepaws on to the ledge where in the ordinary course of things the window would be, he took a survey of the prospect, including a small circular erection surmounted by a statue of the Virgin, raised to commemorate the non-occupation of the city by the Prussians during the war of 1870. Standing almost at the summit of the hill it forms a conspicuous object for miles round. A few minutes sufficed to land us at the top of the hill, where is perched a miniature railway station. Here a little omnibus was waiting.

The priest, unfurling his lettuce-like umbrella, puts it up, and trudges off; the old lady and the poodle get into the omnibus; the door is banged to; the poodle jumps on the seat and looks out at the window; I mount the box, and the vehicle is off, tearing round the cathedral and rattling along the "Grande Rue" of the quiet little city. The driver cracks his whip; Madame la Propriétaire emerges from the portal of the hotel; I descend; polite conventionalities are exchanged; the omnibus drives off to deposit the old lady and the poodle at their destination, wherever it may be, and I am glad to wash off the dust and cinders of a long day's railway travel in a delightfully large and airy room, half *salon*, half *chambre à coucher*, whence, after a rest of half an hour or so, I emerge on a visit of inspection to the curiosities of Langres, whose situation next to that of Laon is the most delightful in France. For a long time I remain leaning over the parapet of the ramparts, surveying a magnificent expanse of sun-flooded champagne country until the Angelus from the cathedral tower breaks upon the ear, warning me that it is six o'clock and the hour of prayer.

Entering the cathedral I find its Southern interior wearing a most picturesque look, with the now declining sun throwing its remaining strength through a large unstained window behind the organ upon the great silver Calvary at the back of the high altar, and upon the neat white caps of some thirty old *bourgeoises*, scattered here and there in the quaint straight-backed and, in some cases, closed

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pews which line the broad, Classic-looking nave on either side. They are awaiting the commencement of the simple evening prayers, which here, as elsewhere—being recited in the vernacular—are largely attended by the humble classes. I remember attending one of these *prières du soir* in the little old fishermen's church at the seaport town of St. Valéry-en-Caux on the Normandy coast. Dimly lighted here and there with a few candles, which flickered on the rough weather-beaten faces of the old fisherfolk as their lips moved in response to the priest, the scene in the rude old building was one for a painter.

The bell has ceased to toll along the roof, a couple of cantors instal themselves in the choir behind the high altar, a priest ascends the richly carved nave pulpit, and anon a low murmuring arises from the old *bourgeoises*. They are reciting the Office of the Rosary. Prayers and responses follow; then comes Benediction. Incense rises in a column before the great silver Christ behind the altar; *Tantum ergo* is sung by the cantors and heartily joined in by the old people; the Host is borne out through the gate at the east end of the choir to the Lady-altar; I pace the solemn procession path with the hymn just sung ringing in my ears and haunting me as only unaccompanied Plain-Song music can; and the old white-capped, neatly shawled dames leave the building one by one for *ménages* where doubtless savoury messes have been meanwhile simmering for the evening meal.

It was at Langres that I made my first acquaintance not only with the Southern type of Early French Gothic, but with that peculiar Burgundian variety which, with its application of Classical detail, affords one of the most striking examples of the long perpetuated influence of Roman architecture, which throughout the archdiocese or rather province of Lyons is more or less observable in twelfth and thirteenth century buildings.

Dedicated to St. Mammès, Langres Cathedral, although deficient in the vastness and aspiring grandeur of her northern sisters, is pleasing from its simple solemnity; its chief differences, arising doubtless from influence of climate, being observable in the simple barrel-vaulted roof, in the smallness of the windows, and in its generally speluncar aspect.

The nave, of great width, is separated from its aisles by pointed arches springing from fluted pilasters, whose capitals wholly Corinthianise, while those of Langres' parent, Autun—a secular church built in rivalry of the "religious"—display both the Grecian acanthus and the Christian sculptured group. The immensely long tunnel-vaulted nave of that pride of Burgundy, the *ci-devant* abbey church of Cluny—whose august early twelfth-century symmetry was damaged in Flamboyant days by the substitution of an enlarged apse for one of the same shape as that of the original semicircular chapel opening out of the



THE APSE, LANGRES



THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH-EAST, LANGRES

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large south transept—had, if we are to credit a couple of engravings in Hawkins's "History of the Origin and Establishment of Gothic Architecture" (1813), a lofty arcade of arches, likewise pointed, on half columns, with pure Corinthian caps and lofty plinths, the same order appearing in that imposing local feature, the five-bayed narthex. Here the attached shafts took the form of square pilasters, thus giving to the piers generally an aspect somewhat similar to those in St. Paul's. Such structures as Cluny, Langres, and Autun mark one of the most extraordinary and, at the same time, most important phases in the history of Pointed Architecture, attentive study of their several peculiarities having put to flight the idea that they are but base imitations of Pointed forms belonging to the decline of the Gothic style, and to establish beyond a doubt the fact that the architects south of the Loire clung to these old Classical forms to the last, abandoning them with manifest reluctance. In Northern Germany a tenacity to the old style, somewhat analogous, may be observed in such churches as Neuss; the Cologne basilicas of S. Maria in Capitolio, St. Cunibert, and St. Martin; Andernach, Bonn, Sinzig, Gelnhausen, Coblenz, Limburg, and a host of others—structures in which, rising as they were during the first quarter of the thirteenth century, when the round arch had disappeared almost everywhere else, we seem to perceive a veneration of Roman memorials. And not only this, but, to quote from delightful old J. Louis Petit, a desire "to preserve and perpetuate them by establishing, according to the principles of their construction, a kindred and lasting style of their own." But provokingly enough, just when the Germans seemed about to bring this noble style of the Rhenish provinces to its height and to superadd to its attractions, they suddenly abandoned it to embrace the Complete Gothic, which in England and France had reached perfection through gradual ages of transition—a style which in Germany seems never to have been properly understood, and therefore practised with little success.

But to return to Langres Cathedral; the ribs of the simple barrel-vaulted roof are supported by Corinthian pilasters springing from those on the nave side of the great piers, and marking off the triforium stage of round-headed arcades into triplets, between each of which, again, is a small pilaster with acanthus-leaved capital.

A single round-headed window serves for each division of the clerestory, the aisles being similarly fenestrated. Westward the nave terminates in an organ gallery supported on two tall Corinthian pillars. A work of the Renaissance (1555), it harmonises admirably with the style of the cathedral, and in its outline recalls the division between the nave and chancel in Hawksmoor's massive Christ Church, Spitalfields. Beneath this screen is formed a spacious vestibule or narthex, which, together with the whole of the western façade—flanked by

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small towers recalling St. Sulpice—is in the miserably Italianised Grecian style of 1761-68. The north nave aisle has several points of interest. At its west end a very beautiful door of latest and richest Romanesque, but again with the introduction of Classic detail as evinced by Corinthian pilasters, opens into the above-mentioned vestibule. From this doorway the view down the aisle is one of great beauty and impressiveness; equally fine are the views across the nave. In the north wall of the same aisle a grilled archway opens into a large chapel of very ornate Palladian character, having a richly vaulted roof, and a most elaborate coeval tessellated pavement. Except for the font, this chapel is devoid of furniture; the foot-pace for the altar, however, is to be seen on the east side. Next to this baptistry door is the shrine of St. Regne, whose image stands niched between two Corinthian pillars. On either side is an elongated panel with sculpture from the life of Christ, the whole forming quite a little gem of the Renaissance. Passing into the north transept the noble simplicity of this cathedral at Langres makes itself felt more and more. Here the detail is richer, a very highly elaborated *guipure* being carried round the arches opening into both nave and choir aisles, as well as beneath the triforium stage, which, similar in character to that of the nave, is repeated on the north and south walls of each transept beneath a large round window with six plate-traceried foliations. The effigy of Monseigneur Guerrin, Bishop of Langres (1852-77), kneeling upon a black marble sarcophagus, assists in imparting solemnity to this transept. The basilican arrangement prevails here, the sanctuary being formed beneath the great crux, devoid, however, as in most Southern French examples, of a central tower. The high altar—very simple and Classical—stands under the arch opening into the eastern limb, where are placed the accompaniment organ and choir-stalls. Behind the high altar is a lofty crucifix in wood and silver, a copy of the celebrated one attributed to the sixteenth-century artist Gentil in the neighbouring church of St. Martin. Its attendant figures are in silver, and the whole work, from its size, has a very imposing appearance from the west end of the cathedral. Tall iron grilles and gates screen off the transepts and choir aisles from the sanctuary; against those on the north the episcopal throne is reared.

The eastern limb is short, consisting only of one bay besides the apse. This bay, of similar character to those in the nave (only, like those in the transepts, more richly detailed), dates, as does the greater part of the cathedral, from the first half of the thirteenth century. It is, in fact, a copy, as I mentioned above, on a somewhat broader scale, of the cathedral at Autun, which was commenced towards the close of the eleventh century and consecrated in 1132, nearly a century before the erection of the nave and transepts at Langres, whose oldest part

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is its apse. This, dating from the second half of the twelfth century, opens into the procession path by nine massive arches on monolithic columns of pink marble with Corinthian capitals. The same graceful *guipure* is carried round each arch, where in the later Northern Gothic a dripstone would be looked for. A blank wall-space supervenes; then we have a triforium of small arcades in pairs, with a Corinthian pilaster between each pair, and a clerestory of simple round-headed windows filled with modern stained glass, the subjects being single figures very archaically treated. The apse roof, a very simple one, unribbed, sorely needs decoration on a dignified scale, as, for instance, a "Majesty," which, in white on a gold ground, would terminate this noble church most impressively.

I had almost forgotten the very beautiful window which Early Middle Pointed art, for the purpose of admitting more light, has inserted above the first bay of the eastern limb on either side. Of the three lights composing these windows the central one runs up into the head of the arch, somewhat after the fashion of the noble west window of All Saints', Margaret Street; the side lights are lower, and are surmounted by inverted trefoils. Excellent modern stained glass, representing full-length figures of saints and bishops, with blue backgrounds balanced by silvery-grey work in the canopies, fills these windows. Except the baptistery and the very poor Middle Pointed chapels radiating from the procession path, these windows appeared to be the only complete Gothic work visible in the cathedral, which has preserved its original character much more completely than its parent at Autun. Two beautiful doors in the south choir aisle of Langres, one in Late Pointed and square-headed, the other rich Romanesque, challenged my attention from their curious juxtaposition; but perhaps the feature that struck me most here—leaving out of the question the employment of Corinthian pilasters and other Classic details in a thirteenth-century building—was the simple sexfoiled and plate-traceried round window lighting the principal face of either transept. Admirable examples for imitation, these roses quite fascinated me.

A stroll along the western ramparts of the city and a dive up a few quaint streets bring me to a cavernous-looking but picturesque church—St. Martin's. Here a raucous-voiced priest is going through the Stations of the Cross, attended by three little choristers in girded albs, one of them acting as crucifer. They make their responses in a somewhat vague and uncertain fashion, by no means coming up to time with the verses of the *Stabat Mater*. Evidently my presence tends somewhat *pour les distraire*, for the priest, doubtless regarding me as the originator of this nonchalance, turns about and for a short space looks rather irate; so I deem it prudent to beat a hasty retreat, and leave ecclesiological gleanings from this happy hunting-ground to be gathered up at a more favourable opportunity.

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I have spent a Saturday of unclouded sunshine in this quiet old cathedral city. Out by six I have, while the day is young, completely lionised it. I have concluded my notes on St. Mammès and St. Martin ; I have made the circuit of its ramparts, getting views of an immense tract of sunlit country down below from every point ; have mingled in the busy throng of the market ; have strolled, book in hand, up and down its ideal Promenade de la Blanche Fontaine, a truly fine avenue of trees recalling the Broad Walk at Oxford ; have "assisted" at the morning Chapter Offices, and now, towards eleven o'clock, it being too hot for further outdoor exercise, I seek the hotel and the shade of its *salon*. The few sounds that penetrate here to break the summer stillness are pleasant sounds—from the garden the hum of the bees, from the kitchen the clatter made by Monsieur le Coq and his subordinates in their active preparation of *déjeuner*. I look about me for writing materials, discern presently a skewer-like pen and a frivolous-looking little inkpot shaped like an apple ; paper I luckily have with me ; so with these implements I do my best towards putting together the framework of the Introductory Chapter to this volume, my enthusiasm for the work being heightened in no small degree by the impressive old cathedral, from the study of which I have just returned.

CHAPTER XIX

DIJON

AFTER hearing part of the Morning Offices in the cathedral at Langres on Sunday, I caught a forenoon train for Dijon, little or nothing of architectural interest on a large scale challenging attention during the somewhat monotonous ride thither. The day, which hitherto had been one of unclouded sunshine, became overcast as, shortly after two, Dijon came in sight; still, I was much struck with my first view of the capital of Burgundy, presenting as it does two distinct and very fine architectural groups, albeit the locally celebrated central spire of the cathedral—for which I anxiously looked—was not in evidence, it having been taken down for purposes of repair.

Of these two groups the western one comprises the cathedral with its pair of octagonal western towers; a church (St. Philibert's), now desecrated, with a tall octagonal tower and spire like that of old Truro Cathedral; and St. Jean, a large aisleless cruciform building, with a couple of square towers flanking a short eastern limb. The eastern group embraces a tall spire, which I supposed belonged to Notre-Dame, though I was quite unacquainted with its outline; the imposing Renaissance façade of St. Michel; a Classical domed church; and sundry square towers belonging to the ducal palace. The whole formed an *ensemble* of great variety, and towards its component members I hastened as soon as I had set foot outside the railway station, anxious to get a clear hour among them before three o'clock Vespers at St. Benigne's Cathedral.

To me Notre-Dame, of all the other churches of Dijon, was of paramount interest. A storm was evidently brewing; clouds of dust obscured the boulevards, and rain began to "spit" ominously. So I jumped into a tramcar, and was soon deposited, after much bumping through the older streets, in the Place d'Armes, behind which the object of my journey rises. Preconceived notions of Notre-Dame had been derived from the sketch of it in Petit's "Church Architecture, with Illustrations," from the "Moyen Age, Monumental," of Chapuy, and also from a very good woodcut in the "Saturday Magazine" of February 1, 1834, in all of which the central tower is represented as being in two stages—the lower one lofty, with circular turrets at each angle; the upper one short, arcaded,

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and crowned by a low pyramidal capping, from which a spirelet rises. But "nous avons changé tout cela"; the "obliterator of historic records" has been here and eliminated the character which this steeple of Notre-Dame possessed, for he has taken away the upper stage altogether, replaced it by a tall four-sided spire, and has prolonged the circular corner turrets into gawky-looking things, capping them with pinnacles. Follies enough and to spare have been committed in our own cathedrals and churches under the name of "restoration" since the Gothic Revival, but in France the mischief has been ten times more fiendish. No doubt the substantial repairs carried out in her churches from one end of France to the other during the reign of Napoleon III enabled the fabrics to resist the destroying influences of time, and without them many of her fanes might ere this have been in ruins; but the reckless manner in which such works were conducted has deprived them of much poetry, to say nothing of obliterating a great deal of the history once so plainly legible in their structures. The destruction of the Middle Pointed nave chapels at Sens and their replacement by modern Transition work, good of its kind, but totally uninteresting, is an instance of destructiveness almost unparalleled.

"Delay the ruthless work awhile—O spare,
Thou stern, unpitied demon of repair,
This precious relic of an early age!
More fatal is thy touch than the fell rage
Of warring elements.

* * * *

It were a pious work, I hear you say,
To prop the falling ruin, and to stay
The work of desolation. It may be
That ye say right: but O! work tenderly;
Beware lest one worn feature ye efface;
Seek not to add one touch of modern grace;
Handle with reverence each crumbling stone;
Respect the very lichens o'er it grown;
And bid each ancient monument to stand,
Supported e'en as with a filial band."

To the architectural and ecclesiastical antiquary every stage in the history of a church has its value, and possesses an interest of its own, so that the obliteration of the work of any one period is like tearing a leaf out of the visible history of the structure. Of course in many instances no little judgment is requisite to discern where the historical interest ceases. Certainly it does not apply to the ill-judged excrescences, mutilations, and alterations of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries, yet many of the works of the earlier years of the former century, especially its furniture, command our admiration and respect.

Sir G. G. Scott attempted to lay down a rule that all architectural work is to be respected which is antecedent to the extinction of Pointed architecture in the

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sixteenth century; and this he urged, if not taken exclusively, may be in the main right. It must, however, be admitted that some works anterior to that great change may be questionable as to their claims for preservation, and certainly some works of later date possess such claims.

I entered this noblest of Burgundian First Pointed interiors—Notre-Dame at Dijon—by a small door opening from the Place des Ducs, and the impression it made will not readily be forgotten. Although it belongs to a great cluster of churches—the outcome of that burst of enthusiasm for building which occurred during the latter half of the twelfth century—Notre Dame at Dijon presents many and very marked peculiarities. These are especially observable in (1) the elongated boldly carved capitals—of the papyrus rather than the acanthus kind—which crown all the circular pillars of the nave; (2) the unfenestrated wall behind the simple tripled arcades forming the triforium stage, as in the choir at Auxerre; (3) the employment throughout the building of large single lancets; (4) the absence of choir aisle and procession path, and (5) the presence of an apsidal chapel on the eastern side of either transept. There is, however, a good deal of detail work, reminding one of Rouen Cathedral, the cluster of shafts forming the responds to the nave arcade and the disposition of the great central tower piers being almost identical. Above the great arches of the crux at Dijon the tower is open, forming a magnificent lantern. Some of the shafts from which its groining ribs spring are only 7 inches in diameter to 20 feet in length, others are only $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, although 15 feet long. Frequently monolithic, these shafts are all entirely detached from the wall. In the nave, the ribs of its sexpartite vaulting spring from slender shafts which rest upon the abaci of the massive columnar piers, not being continued down them in the unpleasant but more truthful manner observable at Séz and Soissons. Each transept at Notre-Dame, Dijon, has a grand fenestration, consisting of a huge circular window, untracered and unfoliated, surmounting a quintuplet of lancets, all filled with coeval painted glass in the mosaic style. Within the circle the manner in which the subjects are placed in roundels formed of lead-work—tracery being, as I said above, absent—is very remarkable.

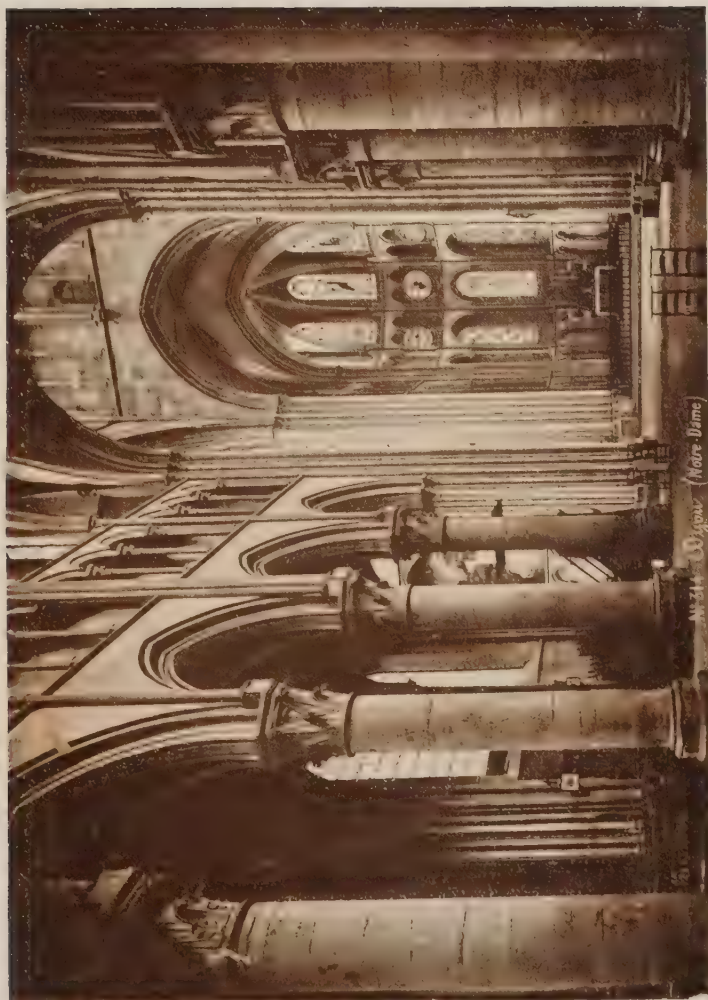
The choir, short and aisleless, terminates in a groined apse, recalling in many of its features St. Peter's Church, Vauxhall, London, and of a singularly *élané* character. The lowest stage of its wall is relieved by trefoiled arcades, then come tall single lancets. Surmounting these is a triforium lighted by unfoliated circles which peer through small arcades. In the clerestory are more tall lancets, where, as well as in the lower windows, is much good modern glass.

Externally the feature, *par excellence*, of this church is its western façade, which, instead of taking the customary gabled form, is rectangular. Although

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the idea for it may have been derived from Southern sources—Pisa or Lucca—the this west front of Notre-Dame has a distinctly Burgundian character, its salient features being the triple arches opening into a deep porch from the street, and the two tiers of continuous arcades on slender detached shafts above. The whole composition, rising very much above the apex of the nave roof, takes the form of an elongated tower, to the extreme right of which a tourelle is perched containing the celebrated “Jaquemart”—a clock brought in 1328 from Courtrai, by Philippe le Hardi. A railing surmounts this tourelle, which is octagonal, and supports an open flèche of ornamental ironwork containing a bell. Within the railing stand three figures, a man, a woman, and a child, the two former dressed in peasant costume, but the child destitute of any garment. Jaquemart and Jaquette are armed with large hammers and strike the hours, while baby tinkles the quarters with his tiny one. As I came out of the church after a second enraptured visit about six o'clock, quite a crowd—including a very portly looking priest who was evidently “lionising” Dijon with a small party of ladies—had assembled in front of the façade to watch these figures go through their performance.

A little to the east of Notre-Dame stands St. Michel, with a western façade equally interesting, though of an entirely different period. It belongs to the Renaissance, and while in its outline and arrangement, *i.e.* with three portals, central compartment, and flanking towers, it recalls the façades of the great mediæval cathedrals, its details are Classic, though applied without much constructional propriety, and with but little ornamental effect. The work of Hugues Sambin—a pupil of Michel Angelo—its greater part dates from the middle of the sixteenth century, but the octagonal domed turrets surmounting it are purely Classical; they are, in fact, a century later, and rather disturb the harmony which reigns below them. In the triple portals the detail is wonderfully well imitated from Romanesque work, particularly in the small figures which form the mouldings of their deep recesses, while the double inner entrance, with its figures niched between the doors, and the sculpture in its tympanum, is so clever an architectural forgery that it needs a keen and practised eye to detect it. A purist will doubtless overlook this western façade of St. Michel at Dijon as an utter barbarism, yet its otherwise “unprofitable magnificence” has its peculiar use, as showing to what extent it is possible to compensate for deficiency of purity in the minor parts by careful adjustment of their arrangement and composition. Let me take a home illustration—Wren's steeple of St. Michael's, Cornhill. It is quite a study, teaching us how details, clumsily designed and unsightly in themselves, are, by the mere force of composition and by a thorough knowledge of the rules which govern proportion, made to assume an effect of singular



Notre-Dame, Dijon (Notre-Dame)

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felicity. At a distance this tower resembles that of Magdalen College, Oxford.

In France the architecture of the Renaissance grew directly from the Gothic, but the change took place very much earlier than it did in England. Almost every large French town offers a specimen of this class of church, wherein the Gothic and Classic element are so intermingled that it is difficult to discern where one begins and the other leaves off. Perhaps the most imposing, as it is the earliest and most complete specimen, is St. Eustache, Paris, a structure in which we do not perceive any attempt on the part of its designer to copy Roman temples or to rival their greatness, but rather to adapt the Classical styles to Gothic forms, whereby the effect taken in the mass is exceedingly grandiose. St. Étienne du Mont, also in Paris, is another building of the same epoch, but, unlike St. Eustache, it is not a homogeneous whole of a composite style, but a building which puts forward one element in one position and one in another, the whole general effect being Pointed. St. Maclou at Pontoise, St. Pierre at Auxerre, and St. Jean-Baptiste at Joigny, may also be taken as types of the Early Renaissance before it passed into what may be called the Jesuit style of Maderno, Borromini, and others. I refer to such churches as S.S. Paul and Louis, the church of the Sorbonne, and that of the Val de Grâce, all in Paris; St. Charles Borromeo at Antwerp, St. Nicholas at Prague, and many others. After this, the architecture of France settled down into the frigid Classicism of the Louis XIV-XVI period, when frightful ravages were made upon the mediæval fittings of her cathedrals and churches—a bathos from which it did not emerge until the era of Napoleon and the restored Bourbons. Then were inaugurated, to remove the excrescences of bad taste, as well as to repair the devastations of the Great Revolution, works which, although carried out with the best intentions, were seriously marred by the ignorance and incapacity of their authors.

A case in point is the abbey church of St. Denis, near Paris, whose restoration, begun under Napoleon I, and resumed under Charles X and Louis-Philippe, revealed a sad series of blunders, incompetencies, and instances of bad taste, comparable with those perpetrated in our own cathedrals of Durham, Lichfield, and Salisbury, through the stupid Georgian ignorance of James Wyatt. For instance, at St. Denis the tympanum of the western portal contained a "Majesty," our Blessed Lord being accompanied by St. Mary and the Apostles. Revolutionary fury had decapitated and mutilated these sacred figures. The head of our Lord was replaced by one imitated from Jupiter Olympus. Above His head, on a cross, was inscribed "INRI," letters never found upon a Romanesque tympanum; in each hand was placed a scroll with a text of scripture written on it, and the chapter and verse goodnaturedly added: while, as the fit *comble* of all,

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the body of St. Mary was equipped with a male head, bearded and moustachioed, thus making of her a thirteenth Apostle! This was too much, and so the hirsute appendages were knocked off, and the head given as far as possible a feminine expression.

Later on, however, during the reign of Louis-Napoleon, when half the French cathedrals were placed under restoration, much of the well-intentioned but absurd work of the previous dynasties perpetrated at St. Denis was undone by M. Viollet-le-Duc; to him and to M. M. Didron and Lassus we are indebted for the revival and purification of mediæval art in France, about the time that our "Cambridge Camden," afterwards the "Ecclesiological Society," began its never to be sufficiently thanked labours. The "Cathedrales de France" and "Moyen Age Monumental," of Chapuy, and Taylor and Nodier's princely "*Voyages dans l'Ancienne France*," no doubt did much to stimulate a love for ecclesiastical antiquities among the French people.

The architectural movement in England had quite a different origin, and went further than it did abroad. With us there has been no period since the Reformation in which constructions, either partially in the spirit of Gothic architecture or reproducing some of its details, have not been erected. Love for Old Pointed art has never become extinct in England: even the absurdities of Strawberry Hill attest this fact, while a glance through the volumes of the "Gentleman's Magazine"—almost the only periodical in which the arts were duly represented, registering as it did all the metropolitan improvements, describing the new churches, and chronicling all the archaeological discoveries—is sufficient to show that, while its contributions betray an ignorance of technicalities, they are spiritedly penned, and did much towards keeping alive the feeble flame of Gothic architecture in England. Warton, Bishop Milner, and John Carter, all men of the eighteenth century, likewise deserve our gratitude for what they wrote or did in the cause of mediæval art. Much of its progress, too, must be traced to the writings of Sir Walter Scott, who will earn from posterity a higher praise than has ever been the lot of any mere literary man, from the purity of his writings, and the lessons which his readers could not fail to draw from his truthful and attractive portrayals of mediæval customs and manners.

That the ecclesiological movement of sixty years ago was the spontaneous growth of the English Church is a fact which few will take the trouble to deny. It is an acknowledged thing that, when all ecclesiastical principles seemed lost in the last century, if English churches were bad, Romanist chapels were worse. In which Church did a better taste first arise? Unhesitatingly it must be referred to the almost simultaneous formation of the Cambridge Camden and Oxford Architectural Societies in the year 1838. To be sure, Pugin had written much,

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and had designed several churches of imposing dimensions for the communion which he had joined, and whose members at first discountenanced his work ; but his principles were far more eagerly embraced by the Church which he had forsaken, and which after a slumber of nearly two centuries was awaking to take her rightful place, and to assume that responsibility, both spiritual and temporal, which she had too long permitted to remain in abeyance.

Neither grave ecclesiastics nor practical architects were among the first and most important of these societies. Set on foot by two undergraduates of Trinity College, Cambridge,¹ truths were grasped and those truths were manipulated. At first it seemed as if a desperate battle were to be waged against overwhelming odds, but ten years passed, allies were aggregated, architects encouraged, committees patronised, and individuals at their private cost built churches more near to the ancient models in grace and adornment than could have been seen for three centuries. England, in fact, was moved from one end to another almost as one man.

The great English ecclesiological movement had no counterpart on the other side of the Channel. There the modern revival of mediæval taste was effected under Government auspices, fostered, as I mentioned just now, by the care of men like Montalembert, Didron, Lassus, and Viollet-le-Duc. There, too, the vast works of cathedral and church restoration, extending over the country at the same time, was a Napoleonic idea, having its origin in the necessity for creating large public enterprises to keep the strong and intelligent class of labourers quiet by employment.

With many admirable examples to the contrary, the seminary education of France cannot be said to have so developed the spirit of historical inquiry as to make the priests of that country what it has made our Anglo-Catholic clergy—good ecclesiologists. Among those exceptions we must not be oblivious of the cathedral bodies of Amiens, Bourges, and Tours—persons whose zeal for the honour of the Sanctuary was combined with ecclesiological learning—who have monographed their splendid stalls and painted windows. But, taking it all

¹ John Mason Neale, the eminent liturgiologist, ecclesiologist, and poet, who died in 1866, and Benjamin Webb, who in 1862 became vicar of St. Andrew's, Wells Street, a mediocre Perpendicular structure of 1847, but which under his régime became enriched with *instrumenta* from the designs of almost every architect of eminence that the Gothic Revival has produced. I am of course not unmindful of the many noble churches raised in England by the Roman Catholics during the half century just passed from the designs of Pugin, Scoles, Hadfield and Weightman, Wardell, Goldie, Buckler, Hansom, Bentley, and others. The new and goodly Reformation in which during that period the Church of Rome has gone hand in hand with the Church of England has, to use the words of an accomplished architectural critic, "caused no rivalry but that of devotion, has involved no loss but of what was worthless, has pursued no policy but that of truth, and has effected no change but one from meanness to beauty, and from heartlessness to love."

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round, we do not perceive among the French nation the same interest in works of antiquity and ecclesiology that we do at home, chiefly from the fact that in France the Government is the custodian of her sacred buildings, thereby precluding that feeling of privilege in being constantly invited to aid in their reparation and embellishment.

The modern town churches met with in France—chiefly from their exaggerated size, the smooth stone used in their construction, and the purity of the atmosphere—do not possess the poetry of design, nor can they ever present that air of antiquity which the churches built under the Gothic revival in England so frequently assume. Indeed, externally a modern French church can rarely be viewed with unalloyed pleasure; but the interiors of such structures as the church of the Sacré Cœur at Moulins, that of La Délivrance near Caen, and those of Ste. Clothilde at Paris, St. Martin at Tours, St. Nicolas at Nantes, and Ste. Marie at Havre, are undeniably imposing from their size, and the minster-like character imparted to them by their consistent stone vaulting.

As a rule, the modern French village church is a very sorry affair, being built in most cases in a raw-looking Romanesque style, having a slate spire, and disfiguring rather than adorning the fair landscape in which it should be set like a gem.

But it is time to return from this rambling train of thought, into which I was primarily led through contemplation of the extraordinary Renaissance façade of St. Michel at Dijon. The interior of this church, to which the front with its deeply recessed porches forms so grand an approach, is gloomy and disappointing, though town-like and spacious. The nave has tall arcades with shafts towards the aisles only, and is destitute of triforium or clerestory; while the aisleless choir, with its tall Flamboyantly traceried windows, either follows the traditional Burgundian plan, as evidenced in Notre-Dame and St. Benigne, or may be traced to that German influence which is so conspicuous in the ecclesiastical buildings of this eastern part of France.

My way back to Vespers at St. Benigne led me past a very extraordinary church, St. Jean. Desecrated until 1872, when it was reconsecrated after undergoing restoration and embellishment, this church forms an important factor in the architectural group viewed from the railway, and in many respects may be looked upon as a model for a large town church, consisting as it does of a very wide nave without aisles, transepts, and a truncated eastern limb flanked by square towers. An impression of great religiousness is created upon entering St. Jean by the disposition of its windows, all of which are placed high up in their respective walls, leaving a great space, which has presented an advantageous field for polychromatic display below. It struck me that Mr. Bodley must have had St.

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Jean at Dijon in his mind when designing the noble town church of St. Salvador at Dundee.

The tracery in the windows at St. Jean is early Flamboyant, and good. Two windows of three lights apiece, with a rose similarly traceried above, serve for the west front, and the principal face of each transept is similarly fenestrated, but the windows lighting the nave are simple lancets. Below these are very low plain arches opening into separate chapels. A grand waggon roof covers nave, transepts, and short chancel—this last, by the way, was reduced to its present dimensions in 1810—and the roof at the crux meets in a great wooden corbel or pendant. There is no east window, but the wall-space above the high altar is frescoed with scenes from the lives of the two St. Johns and a representation of the Eternal Father. Bossuet, Bishop of Meaux (1681-1704), a native of Dijon, was baptised in this church, which until its restoration to sacred purposes formed the *Marché du Midi*. The adjacent St. Philibert, used as a hay store, is a fine example of Burgundian twelfth-century work, having that localism, the western narthex. The Romanesque doorway on its south side is a good specimen of the style, and the lofty octagonal tower and crocketed spire play a very important part in the general views of Dijon.

The bell of St. Benigne had ceased to toll, and the canons were singing None in choir, when, shortly after three, I passed under the western porch and pushed open the door, from which a short flight of steps conducts to the nave of this Middle Pointed cathedral.

The Dimensions of St. Benigne are not vast; indeed, as a whole, it is quite eclipsed by Notre-Dame. Originally conventual, it became, on the re-establishment of the hierarchy in France early in the last century, the Bishop's seat, the former cathedral having succumbed to revolutionary fury. Cruciform in plan, it is distinctly Burgundian in its details. These are especially graceful in the transepts and short one-bayed apsidal eastern limb, whose windows, by the way, would be greatly improved by painted glass. There is no procession path, but its side arches open to apsidal chapels east of either transept. Of these the southern one is most gorgeously decorated with colour and stained glass, and contains a good modern Gothic altar. By the way, the use of Benediction created—now some fifty-four years ago—a revolution in the *instrumenta altaris*. Almost universally in France, over the altars placed in restored chapels of cathedrals and churches, stands a closed tabernacle surmounted by an open baldachin, canopying over the monstrance, which again soars up into pinnacles and turrets, affecting to combine the movable monstrance and ciborium, the Spanish metallic custodia, the German *Sakramenthaus*, and the Italian baldachin.

Geometrical tracery prevails in all the windows of the choir and transepts of

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St. Benigne. Those in the lowest stage of the apse are of two lights apiece; the upper ones of three. Each transept has a noble window similarly traceried, and placed very high up in its wall. From clusters of reed-like shafts, all most exquisitely foliated, spring the arches of the crux, not open, as at Notre-Dame, where it forms a lantern, but sufficiently light and elegant.

I was much disappointed with the nave. It is later and very inferior in its workmanship, while the absence of cusps to the lights, and of foliations to the circles composing the tracery of its clerestory windows, imparts an impoverished air to this part of the church, which is, however, enriched not only by the statues bracketed upon its pillars after the Belgian manner, but by the gallery and case of the western organ, which makes a very imposing show.

At the time of my visit one external feature of St. Benigne, its tall needle-like spire of local celebrity, known to me by engravings, had disappeared, together with the whole of the nave roof, for purposes of "restoration." I learn, however, that this interesting and picturesque old spire has been replaced entirely on the old lines, and that no fanciful modern erection has supplanted it, as was the case at Notre-Dame. A pair of octagonal towers with tiled pyramidal cappings flank the western façade. One of these low spires has had its old sober, time-coloured tiles replaced by new ones. Their flaunting green and red patterns are most offensive, and this, I suspect, is what has taken place with regard to the roofs of the cathedral generally. When I saw St. Benigne the contrast between the roof of the tower which had been renewed and the one still retaining its old tiling was too striking to be overlooked.

There is a very fine western narthex. The arch opening into it from the street has a single row of arcades above it similar to that at Notre-Dame, but very much later in style. A lean-to roof connects it with the west front, whose window, now bricked up, exhibits a curious sort of debased plate tracery devoid, like the clerestory, of foliation.

What strikes the visitor to the French cathedrals and churches most painfully is the scanty attendance at, and the uncongregational character of, their services—a contrast to those of Germany.

A year or two since, when making the tour of Westphalia for the purpose of investigating its ecclesiology, I spent a Sunday in that province's capital—the most Catholic city of Northern Germany—Münster, and it is no exaggeration to say that, except from one o'clock to two, the hour of *Mittagessen*, the cathedral and churches were never empty from six in the morning to the same hour in the evening. In a city like Münster it is impossible for the ecclesiologist to remain long in a state of passivity, so at half-past six o'clock I was up and in the Dom, whose spacious area was crowded for a succession of Low Masses, which were



THE WEST FRONT OF THE CATHEDRAL, DIJON

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being said at every altar in the building by priests in green chasubles; and thronged as the great church was, more standing than could be accommodated with seats, a most profound and solemn silence was maintained. And every moment the great transeptal doors opened to admit fresh comers.

Returning to the Dom after breakfast, and witnessing the start of a very pretty procession from the church of St. Mary over the Water, I found ingress impossible—a service consisting merely of preaching and some simple hymns, but evidently highly popular, then proceeding—and when the doors were thrown open for the egress of the vast congregation, I thought the stream would never end. At the Chapter Offices the attendance was not so large, but at midday the great church was again filled to overflowing for the *Sing Amt*, when an enormous concourse joined in singing hymns at different periods of the Mass to the accompaniment of the organ, but without the aid of a choir; indeed, the whole scene was most impressive, affecting even to tears.

Similar services took place in the parish churches at different times, and several of these I attended wherever I could get in. At St. Lambert's—the largest and most imposing of the Münster churches—persons were standing outside the doors *en queue* and there joining in the hymn-singing, while everywhere the attendance of men was most remarkable. At five o'clock another immense congregation gathered in the Dom, when a last and most moving service, that of Benediction, took place. Again there was no choir, but the magnificent organ led the voices of the people in the responses and hymns incidental to that short but beautiful Office.

Haunted by Notre-Dame and the western façade of St. Michel, I paid each another visit before quitting Dijon; peeped through a chink in the door of the desecrated St. Étienne—a church of the tenth century, rebuilt in the eighteenth in admirable imitation of Romanesque; sat for a brief space in the cathedral, where a cough or the shutting of a door alone broke the silence; retraced my steps to the railway station, reclaimed my knapsack from the *garçon* of the buffet, and, knowing what French trains are on a Sunday night, wisely secured a seat in the corner of a third-class compartment.

The journey from Dijon to Autun passed through various phases *vis à* Beaune, whose church and ideal Hôtel Dieu I deeply regretted my inability to visit, and through the vineyards district, along which the summer twilight began to steal, long after the last rich crimson glow of sunset had left the towers and square spires of its thickly set village churches.

As far as Chagny, where carriages are changed for Autun, the journey was pleasant enough, and my travelling companions, chiefly country fathers and mothers with their olive branches, all hugging some fairing or other, were suffi-

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ciently amusing. Then an occasional lurid glare betokened that we were passing through a busy coaling district, imparting quite a Dantean aspect to this phase of the journey, which between Epinac—where some military manœuvres had taken place—and Autun was rendered unpleasantly lively by the hilarity of the military, who had figured therein. Indeed, I had just registered a mental vow never to travel in France on Sunday night again, when I was relieved to hear an historic name vociferated along a dimly-lighted platform: "Autun! Autun! tout le monde descend!" Emerging from the exit I expected to find the omnibus besieged, but to my agreeable surprise the crowd had melted away somehow and somewhere, so the vehicle being quite untenanted, my request as to whether I might take the box-seat was met with a polite "Oui! oui! Monsieur! oui! oui! si vous voulez!" from Monsieur le Cocher, who seemed quite glad to see me.

As we drive through Autun its streets are as silent as the grave. The barking of watch-dogs behind the *portes cochères* alone breaks the stillness; lights here and there in the upper windows of houses betoken that their inmates are seeking what Mrs. Blimber called "the regions of the drowsy god"; and the sweet smells wafted down from the thyme-clad hills under which the city nestles, mingling with that arising from the freshly watered earth—for rain has been falling heavily here, as at Dijon—greet the olfactory nerves in a manner doubly welcome after the confinement of the railway carriage. A few people are sitting before the cafés in the great market square as, just upon the stroke of ten, the omnibus rumbles over its stones, presently depositing me at the bureau of my hotel.

CHAPTER XX

AUTUN .

EVIDENTLY an atmospheric depression is passing over the Autunois district of Burgundy, for when—shortly after seven on Monday morning—I throw back the jalousies of my bedroom window, the sky is gloomy and overcast. Arriving after dark on the previous evening, I had been unable to distinguish the environments of the inn; now I perceive that it lies somewhat removed from the market square, being approached therefrom by a *porte cochère*; while from the fact of several droves of sheep passing beneath my window, I assume not only that it is market morning, but that the road is a public one, forming, as I found later in the day while on a tour of inspection, a short cut from the market square to the upper part of the old city.

The immense market square in front of the hotel is a moving mass of sheep, who invade even the steps of a gaunt-looking church, which frowns with Classical severity upon the crocketed Gothic spire of the cathedral as though in reproof of its lightness. The oxen, noble-looking creatures with great mild eyes, are yoked together in a line below a species of raised causeway common to the markets of this part of France; while underneath an avenue of trees, on the same side of the square as the hotel, are ranged stalls, upon which is heaped the *omnium gatherum* of domestic articles usually seen in such places. Above all this, rising with a background of gently undulating hills, is seen the iron-grey spire of Autun Cathedral, towards which, having exhausted the most amusing features of the market-place, I make my way with the following lines running in my head:—

“Roquette dans son temps, Talleyrand dans le nôtre,
Furent les évêques d'Autun.
Tartuife est le portrait de l'un :
Ah ! si Molière eût connu l'autre !”

The streets, steep and cobbled, fearful places to ascend in tight boots on a hot day, are as melancholy as the Bailey at Durham. Should any of my readers have the misfortune to visit Autun *chaussured* thus, an easy cut from the market square to the principal street will be found *vid* an avenue of shops—a forlorn-

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looking place, giving one the idea, to take a home illustration, of the Lowther Arcade in its declining days. Like the celebrated portico at Cambridge, how such a place got into Autun it is difficult to conceive. Not a quarter of the shops seemed to be tenanted. Up the winding streets you go until presently you emerge upon a roughly paved, and, if I remember rightly, grass-grown square, whose south side is occupied by this small, but very interesting cathedral, its crocketed spire and Flamboyantly fenestrated aisles giving, at a first glance, the idea of a Late building, little preparing you for the simple, solemn Transitional character of its interior.

Like many churches in this part of France, the cathedral of Autun is dedicated to St. Lazare, first Bishop of Marseilles. Until early in the twelfth century, when it underwent extensive structural changes, it had for its patron St. Nazaire—an abbot of Lérins, near Cannes, in the fifth century, and said to have been a disciple of St. Honoratus, afterwards Bishop of Arles. It is almost needless to say that the legend of Lazarus having been first Bishop of Marseilles has nothing but the grossest credulity for its support. The cult, however, grew, and has had its influence on the Gallican Church. Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, the legend runs, came to Marseilles, driven from the Holy Land by the persecution of the Jews. Martha was buried at Tarascon, Mary at Marseilles and Vézelay, and Lazarus at Autun. Thus it came about that, upon the rebuilding of the old basilican cathedral in the twelfth century, it was thought that the bones of Lazarus must be somewhere in its precincts, whereupon it was re-dedicated, no longer to St. Nazaire, but to Lazarus who was raised from the dead.

And here are the three effigies of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary, affixed to the central pillar of the great western portal, which, after the Burgundian fashion, is covered by a deeply projecting porch with three open arches, and altogether looking very Southern. Above the narrower arch on either side rises a tall severe-looking tower and square stone spirelet. The great portal is situated very imposingly at the summit of a flight of steps formed within this speluncar porch, which, by the way, must not be confused with the great narthexes or *porches des catéchumènes* found at Vézelay and Tournus, and at Cluny before its destruction. An upper storey imparts to the west portal at Autun more than ordinary grandeur and dignity, though unluckily the proximity of houses to the west end of the cathedral does not allow a really satisfactory view of the whole composition to be taken.

In style this western portal of Autun is richest Romanesque. Some of its features, notably the three slender shafts from which the great arch springs, betray a very strong Byzantine feeling, like all southern French Romanesque; while in the fluted pilasters on which the lintel rests it is impossible to overlook



DETAIL OF WEST ENTRANCE, AUTUN



THE WEST ENTRANCE OF THE CATHEDRAL AUTUN

AUTUN

the influence which, as we shall see more distinctly when we get inside the church, the architecture of existing Roman remains has had over this noble piece of twelfth-century workmanship. Grand but wild is the composition in the tympanum. As was customary, this space is filled with a representation of the Last Judgment, into which are introduced several devils of colossal proportions and of appalling aspect, who are seizing and tormenting the figures of the condemned. An equally exaggerated figure of St. Michael weighs a soul and protects it against the combined efforts of two of these demons, who endeavour to press close to the side of the bearer of the scales. These are to the left hand of our Saviour, Who is seated in the aureole with both arms extended. The head is gone, but the cruciform nimbus remains. To His right are the blessed. A row of small figures, in attitudes corresponding with the two divisions above, form a species of frieze in the lintel, and deserve study for the varied expressions which the sculptor, whoever he was, has thrown into them. During some miserable alterations which were inflicted upon the cathedral towards the close of the last century under the influence of the Maréchal de Richelieu, a friend of Voltaire, this rich sculpture was daubed over with plaster—a proceeding so far fortunate, since the plaster has all been scraped off, and the whole work, with the exception of the head of our Saviour, has come down to us in a marvellously complete and well-preserved manner.

The lofty flight of steps inside the great porch is rendered necessary by the slope from east to west of the ground on which the cathedral is built, a natural cause which, while it contributes in no small degree to its great picturesqueness, assists in imparting to the mass an air of greater size, for in dimensions the cathedral of Autun is one of the smallest in France. Windows of very good Flamboyant character (1460-70) light the aisles; heavy flying buttresses give importance to the untouched clerestory; a fine but sculptureless Romanesque portal admits to the north transept, and a low Late Gothic tower, with one large pinnacle at its north-west angle, and smaller ones rising from its enriched parapet, crowns the intersection. This is surmounted by a tall crocketed spire, recalling Norwich, though the steeple in the mass is more suggestive of Lichfield. At Autun the spire rises from the middle of the "squat" tower without broaches or clustering pinnacles at its base, but the impoverished appearance of a spire in this position is in some degree redeemed here by the cusped and arcuated pediments, of which there is one on each side at its base.

There is a short eastern limb of two bays; but, conformably to the Burgundian method, no circumambient aisle or radiating chapels. I suspect, however, that neither the three-sided apse to the choir nor that terminating either aisle is original work, but an architectural forgery of the Flamboyant epoch, and this

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suspicion is confirmed when on passing into the interior I observe that modern Late Pointed glass of a very thin and jejune character has been inserted in the windows of each apsidal termination.

The similarity which the interior of Autun Cathedral bears to that of Langres—a later copy on a grander and broader scale—is too striking to be overlooked. The nave (c. 1130) is perhaps more *élancé* than that at Langres, and retains all its original features; but the aisles have been greatly disturbed by the chapels thrown out from them during the Flamboyant epoch. Here are Pointed arches springing from fluted pilasters, and here is the same type of triforium stage, viz. three narrow round-headed arcades between Corinthian pilasters, the simple clerestory of one round-headed window to each bay, and the barrel-vaulted roof spanned at the interval of each bay by a broad unmoulded rib. Although some of the details of the interior of Autun Cathedral—notably the capitals of the nave pilasters—do not present so thoroughly Classical an appearance as those at Langres, it must be accepted, since the magnificent pile of Cluny Abbey fell a victim to private cupidity, as the best specimen of that peculiar type of Burgundian Gothic so often found in the Lyonnais district. Concerning this quaint admixture of the Classic element with the Transition of the twelfth century, I may just recall the attention of my readers to the fact that the remains of an earlier period have at Autun, as elsewhere in the Lyonnais, exercised no inconsiderable influence on the growing Pointed style. “Some antiquaries,” remarked one of our most eminent architectural critics, “have not hesitated to consider it a bad imitation of Gothic forms belonging to the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. In fact, its fluted columns or pilasters, their Corinthian capitals, and the whole arrangement, are so eminently Classical as almost to justify the doubt in those who are not familiar with the history of the southern styles of France.” There cannot, however, be a shadow of doubt that the peculiarities we observe in Autun Cathedral are traceable to the two noble Roman gateways still remaining in the lower part of the city near the railway station. I visited these remains in the evening, and the resemblance which the triforium range bears to the range of small arches alternating with pilasters in the upper part of the Porte d’Arroux—one of these gateways—is too striking for the theory to be doubted for a moment. In short, wherever these relics occur, as at Langres, Lyons, Arles, Nîmes, and Orange, there will be found in the churches, or contiguous to them, some attempt at imitation, even in works belonging to a period in which the rules of the prevailing styles appear to have been definitely settled.

The separation between the two great architectural divisions of France may be effected by a line drawn across its map in an oblique direction from the mouth of the Loire to Lausanne. In the provinces to the north of that line we



THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH WEST, AUTUN

AUTUN

find the churches of an earlier age replaced either entirely or in greater part by others, the outcome of that great age of architectural enthusiasm comprised between the last twenty years of the twelfth and the first half of the thirteenth centuries.

Southwards, church architecture after reaching a certain point stood still, never, except in a few instances, being carried to such perfection as in the north.¹

Pointed arches, domical vaults over large spaces, and an excellent school of sculpture had, it is true, made their appearance in Aquitaine and Burgundy half a century before Normandy, Picardy, and Champagne received them, yet the people of those provinces had attained to much greater elevation in their buildings and more expansion in their ground plans, so that all things considered the two schools were tolerably well balanced.

With the glories of Amiens, Paris, Rheims, Rouen, and Troyes fresh in his mind, the ordinary visitor will doubtless experience a slight feeling of disappointment on encountering the gloomy grandeur of Autun and Toulouse, Issore and Le Puy, Tournus and Châlons-sur-Saône. No enormous sweeps of jewelled glass in lofty clerestory or transeptal rose are here, nor spacious procession paths with chapels radiating from them to impart such an air of mystery and indefinite length to the building viewed from its western extremity, but rather such features and details as are appropriate to a country whose climate for a considerable portion of the year obliges its inhabitants to seek all the shade available.

At Autun, despite the absence of thirteenth-century grace, vastness, and luminosity, there is something truly awful in the Early Pointed sternness of its nave, choir, and crossing, upon the two former of which the Flamboyant epoch has engrafted a series of chapels—good examples of that boldness and lightness sometimes found in combination in this latest phase of Gothic.

Of course, to accommodate these accretions the original plan of Autun Cathedral has been much disturbed, but above the cusped and ogée-canopied arches opening into the southern range of chapels, portions of the original Romanesque work—the upper part of the windows—still remain.

One chapel in this aisle has a doorway of singular beauty. Cunningly wrought and brilliantly coloured, its tympanum is charged with a group of the Blessed Virgin attended by angels.

Another doorway exhibiting choice Late Gothic workmanship admits to the sacristies from the south transept. This portal has its ogée canopy richly finialed.

¹ Among the churches to the south of this boundary line evincing in their construction a Northern character, the cathedrals of Bordeaux, Nevers, Bourges, Clermont Ferrand, Limoges, portions of Lyons, Narbonne, St. Flour and Mende, and the churches of La Chaise-Dieu and St. Maximin, Ste. Cécile at Albi, and that of the Jacobins at Toulouse, deserve mention.

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crocketed and flanked by pinnaced buttresses, the actual door being obtuse-headed, with the super-imposed space between it and the canopy relieved by an elongated rose, Flamboyantly traceried, and of great beauty.

Ingres' picture of *The Martyrdom of St. Symphorien at Autun for refusing to join a Procession in honour of Cybele* appropriately lends an additional solemnity to that portion of the cathedral graced by the doorway of which I have sketched the salient features.

Classicism is not carried at Autun to the same extent as at Langres, where the pier capitals wholly Corinthianise. Here they are carved more conformably to Gothic models, each in itself forming a study. Not a few are strikingly curious, and it is interesting to find subjects from fabled as well as scriptural story. Two near the western entrance illustrate "Androcles and the Lion" and the "Wolf and the Stork." Of the sacred subjects, that of the "Pelican in her Piety," upon a capital in the eastern limb, is perhaps the most striking. Indeed, the study of this cathedral may contribute to mature theories of the highest interest in the principles of Christian art, for during the time that it was in progress the cathedral school of Autun was being presided over by Honorius, by whom a Liturgical Summa, in which are found the boldest ideas of Christian mysticism applied to the construction of basilicas, was composed. The whole sculpture, then, of Autun Cathedral—the portal, nave, and aisles—has for its end to trace the pictorial history of the Church's life amid the agitations of earth.

Its cumbersome fittings deprive the nave of Autun Cathedral of that spaciousness which forms so pleasing a feature at Langres. A wide Late Gothic arch, foliated and subfoliated, spans the church at its west end and supports the organ. Nave and aisles are closely chaired, as at Tours. The two easternmost bays contain the *chorus cantorum*, the walls being backed by screens copied from the arcades in the triforium and filled with glass; a poor sham Gothic pulpit replaces that from which Talleyrand must have preached; the central tower does not form a lantern; the presbytery, arranged beneath it, extends into the two-bayed eastern limb; and the high altar with its surrounding furniture bespeaks too plainly the depraved taste of the First Empire.

The northern choir aisle constitutes the Lady Chapel, where, on the first morning of my visit, a memorial Mass was being said. The celebrant was attended by deacon and sub-deacon, all in vestments of black with silver orphreys. At the conclusion of the Mass a picturesque scene was presented by one of the officiants standing at the foot of the catafalque, processional crucifix in hand, during the asperging and censing by the celebrant, who assumed a black cope for the function.

About nine o'clock Terce, Mass, and Sext were said by the canons in a



A CAPITAL IN THE NAVE, AUTUN

AUTUN

Flamboyant chapel opening out of the south choir aisle, the reduced pecuniary resources of the chapter militating against the choral rendering of these Offices.

A long country walk had been planned, but the unsettled state of the weather forbade its being carried into execution. However, there was plenty to be seen and to cause diversion in and about my hotel, whose kind proprietress was all anxiety as to what I would do "*pour passer le temps.*" The hotel was at my disposal, and I was to do exactly as though I were *chez moi*. "Would I sit in the *bureau* or in the *petit salon*," or "Would I walk in the garden?" In the first-named retreat—luncheon having concluded—the market folks were constantly in and out, paying their reckonings, exchanging a variety of compliments with Madame, and I fear somewhat seriously interfering with the artistic pursuits of one of the olive branches, who was portraying houses and animals in a primitive and Anglo-Saxon fashion upon paper. Then there was the *petit salon* alluded to by Madame—an elegant apartment with a piano in it, upon which, if musically inclined, you might play tunes; where mats artfully spread here and there upon the *frottée* floor tripped up unwary visitors; where china dogs and cats "set" to one another on the aforesaid piano; where, in short, everything was on the most genteel scale imaginable. But the garden, a very charming one, a square plot of ground entered from the courtyard of the hotel, was the best place after all. Here vegetables and fruit grew in homely propinquity with

"Large dropping poppies and queen hollyhocks,
With butterflies for crowns—tree peonies
And pinks and goldilocks."

Above its wall on one side rose the roofs of the Maison Dieu, which when darkness fell was silhouetted with charming effect against a stormy-looking sunset sky.

Thus the day wore on—varied by another visit to the cathedral—until five o'clock, when a dish of tea was prepared and brought to me in the garden by Madame herself. Much refreshed, I started forth on a ramble, despite the somewhat threatening aspect of the heavens. Traversing the city in the direction of the railway, I soon arrived at the grand Roman Porte d'Arroux, already mentioned as having furnished the model for several details in the cathedral. Passing through it, I found myself in a straggling suburb of Autun, consisting of cottages lining the road for a considerable distance. Soon the cottages were left behind, and I emerged upon a road whence a glorious panorama of Burgundian country was spread, bounded in the distance by what seemed to be an interminable chain of hills, which every now and then a gleam of sunshine lit up with an effect almost magical.

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A modern Romanesque church, situated upon a knoll, challenged inspection. It proved to be a very poor affair indeed, with a roof groined in plaster, which precious material had in places fallen off in great patches, revealing the laths above it. The nave was aisleless, but there were transepts opening from it, and an apsidal sanctuary. Here a Sister of Charity was reverently attending to the wants of the several lamps pendant before the altars, which, although tricked out with imagery from the toy-shop, were pleasing from the fact that, in lieu of frontal, each had a subject in outline from the Life of Our Lord simply incised in the stonework.

The situation of the church was delightful, and from the door of its transept Autun could be seen, including the cathedral, whose crocketed, Lichfield-like central spire was thrown into startling relief by the dark hills impending the city just behind it.

Upon these hills I spent the early part of the second day of my visit, before starting for Moulins. The sun shone brightly ; the turf, formed almost exclusively of thyme, was soft and springy ; streamlets of water trickled down in every direction, and Autun, spread like a map at the feet, nestled just below, while beyond the Roman gates a sun-flooded tract of country, bounded by hills, combined to form a truly charming picture. Altogether it was a delightful change from the gloom of the preceding day.

Of the hare-bells growing in abundance here I was able to gather quite a bouquet for Madame, who, upon its presentation, expressed herself "*ravissée*," instantly placing the posy in a tumbler of water and carrying it in triumph to the *salle à manger*, where it subsequently graced the table at luncheon.



THE NORTH SIDE OF THE CATHEDRAL, AUTUN

CHAPTER XXI

MOULINS-SUR-ALLIER

THE railway ride from Autun to Moulins, although an exceedingly picturesque and interesting one scenically—lying as it did through the lovely district of the Morvan—was not at all fertile in the study of the provincial character. Indeed, had it not been for a slight ebullition of mirth called forth by the frantic efforts of an old farmer to discern the whereabouts of his railway ticket, which eventually, at my suggestion, turned up in his umbrella, the ride would have passed without incident of any kind.

There was just time, on arriving at Nevers, to get a "Sandwich au jambon de York" and a run round the cathedral before I was once more in the train and rushing southwards through the valley of the Allier towards Moulins.

On my return to the railway station at Nevers I had found its *salle d'attente* a scene of much animation and bustle, consequent upon the departure of the pupils from some large lycée which had evidently just broken up. The young gentlemen, with whom there was a large contingent of papas and mammas, uncles, aunts, and cousins by dozens, were oozing away to their homes in a genteel and Blimber-like fashion that would have excited the greatest contempt in the mind of an Etonian, an Harrovian, or a Marlburian. Two of these young academicians are the only occupants of the carriage beside myself. A lady, parasoled and gloved *à merveille*, comes to see them off, providing them with sweetmeats and some juvenile literature, which serve to beguile the tedium of the journey for half-an-hour or so, at the expiration of which period the juveniles begin to show signs of what I believe are technically termed by their elders "the fidgets." A violin, forming a portion of their *impedimenta*, is taken from its case and a few excruciating noises produced therefrom. Then they proceed to translate the titles of my books and papers—"Le Dix-Neuvième Siècle de Juin, 1894." "Denis Duval, par W. M. Thackeray," "Manuel des Voyageurs de Murray pour la France, Tom. II." and so forth. As we approach Moulins the elder of the youths draws from his waistcoat pocket a cigarette—a pallid weed that looks as if it had been smoking by itself—eyeing me meanwhile, evidently in hope of my proffering a light. But, while peering over the leaves, observant

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of all this, I feign to be absorbed in Mr. Pater's elegant essay on Vézelay in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century*. Arriving at Moulins, the carriage door is opened for me by my young *compagnon de voyage* with as much politeness as the frustrated hope that anticipated a light would permit, and so we part.

The afternoon is intensely hot, and as the train steams into the very imposing station of this little city, the modern twin spires of its cathedral and church of the Sacré Cœur rise up white against a cloudless blue sky from the monotonous plain in which it is located, and through which runs the Allier, shrunk by the dry season to a thread, with an extensive tract of sand intervening between it and its banks.

The foundation of the see of Moulins was due originally to Louis XVI, who was extremely desirous for the planting here of a bishop's seat, but the civil and religious troubles which almost immediately overtook the country hindered the carrying out of that pious monarch's wishes to the full. The Concordat of 1801 did not recognise the see, but another Concordat, sixteen years later, re-established it, together with several others that had been suppressed. The prelate who was then nominated—Mgr. Antoine de Pous—was, however, unable to take possession of his bishopric until towards the close of 1823, when he had assigned to him as his cathedral the Flamboyant chapel of the Duke of Bourbon's old château.

To this inadequate church a nave with western towers and graceful spires was added between 1855 and 1871 in a grand and bold Early French Gothic style from the designs of Viollet-le-Duc, who felicitously introduced bands of puce-coloured stone in imitation of those streaks of lava which form so important a feature in the churches of the Auvergnat, notably at Le Puy and in Notre-Dame at Clermont Ferrand.

I was somewhat prepared for disappointment (indeed I only looked upon Moulins as a convenient centre whence to visit the neighbouring abbey of Souvigny), but a few hours in and about its cathedral served to dispel this idea, and I finally left it much impressed with its grace and with the spirit of mediævalism that has not only been allowed, contrary to custom, to pervade its *instrumenta*, but which has extended to the vestments of its clergy—ameliorations due to Mgr. de Dreux Brézé, a prelate of great ecclesiological knowledge and research, who was called to preside over the see about half a century ago.

In the side chapels of the choir, however, the altar-pieces still retain their eighteenth-century character. Poor they are, and utterly lacking that beautiful symbolism which is so characteristic a feature of such works belonging to the Early Renaissance period; still, as a mark of history, they deserve to be spared,



THE CHOIR OF THE CATHEDRAL, MOULINS

MOULINS-SUR-ALLIER

and after all do not harmonise ill with the late fourteenth-century Flamboyant work of the choir—a structure exhibiting all the faults of its class, and one not to be named with the magnificent and substantial works which in England were being raised by Wykeham, Chillenden, and Thoresby. One of the lateral chapels contains a specimen of depraved sixteenth-century taste in the shape of a statue carved in stone, but coloured only too faithfully to represent a wasted corpse (of a female most probably), around which the worms (*Job* xxiv, v. 20) are seen feeding “sweetly.” Underneath is the date, 1557, and the following epitaph:

“Olim formosa fueram qui corpore putri
Nunc sum: tu simili corpore, lector, eris.”

Truly sepulchral repulsiveness could go no further!

It was a relief to turn to an elaborately sculptured stone staircase, closely resembling the beautiful *Escalier de l'orgue* in St. Maclou at Rouen.

On the morning of my visit all the altars were vested in white frontals, and the clergy celebrating at them wore flowing mediævally shaped chasubles of the same hue. A little server whom I noticed preceding one of the canons to the sacristy at the conclusion of a low Mass presented quite a striking combination of colours—a pink-girdled surplice, a puce-coloured cassock, rather short, revealing a considerable interval of grey trouser and not overclean white stocking, and the remains of a pair of yellow sand-shoes, forming his costume.

The high altar in the cathedral at Moulins stands at the top of the few steps just beneath the arch opening into the choir. It is a double one, with frontals facing east and west, the same “ornaments” of course serving for either side. Over it is reared a handsome Gothic baldacchino of wood, gilded, having a cusped arch beneath a gable on each side and a spiral roof. Behind it is the *chorus cantorum*, and in the chord of the three-sided apse is placed the episcopal throne, with an overhanging canopy quite mediæval in feeling. There is a considerable quantity of Late Gothic painted glass in the aisles and also in the procession path, which, singularly enough, does not follow the line of the apse, but has a perfectly straight eastern wall¹ pierced with large Late Decorated windows. Its north-east corner presents a charming feature in the shape of a square-headed doorway, surmounted by an elongated-headed window of two lights with Flamboyant tracery. This is the door by which the cathedral should for the first time be entered, for the sake of the picturesque cross views embracing the fourteenth-century choir with its old painted glass and

¹ I observed this same arrangement of the procession path in other churches of this part of France—notably at Clamecy, an Early Pointed example. Evidently it is a localism. The “New Building” at the east end of Peterborough cathedral may be cited as a remarkable instance of “squaring” an apse.

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gorgeous baldacchino, and the nave with its severe First Pointed arcade and clerestory—the latter reminiscent of Chartres. There are no transepts, but upon the western point of the choir roof, which rises a few feet above that of the nave, a small *flèche* is placed, masking in some degree the disparity in the two heights. Moulins presents another good example of the Gothic revival in France in the shape of the church of the *Sacré Cœur*—a truly noble specimen of the genius of M. Lassus, between whom and our Ecclesiological Society a friendly intercourse was long kept up. With the object, apparently, of getting the main front with its two spires to “give” on to the *place*, orientation has been disregarded. This rule, so rigidly adhered to with us, unless set aside by some cogent reason, even in the laxest times of church discipline, has been by no means so strictly followed in France. Mr. Fergusson rejoices in this fact. “Fortunately,” he says, “for their architectural designs, the French have not the same superstition with regard to orientation as the English. Many of our best modern churches are ruined by being turned the wrong way.”

The church of the *Sacré Cœur* at Moulins is, like that of *Sainte-Clothilde* at Paris, a miniature cathedral—comprising nave with double aisles and western steeples, transepts and choir, with procession path and radiating chapels; yet neither of these churches has that solidity, nor can they ever wear that air of antiquity which our English architects have, in their more humbly dimensioned buildings, so often and so successfully attained. But the interior of the *Sacré Cœur* at Moulins, as I remarked above, is wonderfully minster-like and impressive, and the views across the nave—whose piers, by the way, are gathered up into very harmonious clusters—from the large unchained space at its western extremity have considerable poetry. There is no painted glass in the nave clerestory. Here the windows are of that very early French type we see at Chartres. Those in the eastern (really western) clerestory of either transept and choir, as well as those in the tall thickly-set lancets of the apse—for which Chartres has evidently again furnished the model—have all received their complement from the atelier of Lorin. The general effect is rich and good, but the introduction into the south transept windows of figures of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, Napoleon III and the Empress Eugénie, sufficiently indicates the utter incongruity of the costume of the last two centuries for ecclesiastical decoration. The finest figures are those of the Apostles and Doctors in the choir clerestory—they are truly superb; finer, I think, than the very striking ones in the choir of *Notre-Dame* at Paris.

CHAPTER XXII

SOUVIGNY

A CERTAIN August day of 1894 is one to be marked with a white stone among the many happy ones I have spent in ecclesiology. At six o'clock, when I leant from the casement of my room at Moulins, a light mist was veiling the cathedral spires, heralding a day of intense heat, so that the project I had formed of walking to Souvigny, distant about five miles, had to be abandoned. Certainly it was in every way better to spoil a franc than to spoil a temper, and to arrive on the scene of enjoyment fatigued and out of humour; so, like Mr. and Mrs. Brown in the "Pop Visit," I "rid," hazarding a variety of conjectures when the train got clear of Moulins as to the scene of Sterne's "Maria."

"It was heat and midday," with a misty sun looming from a sirocco-looking dusky-blue sky, when—the train having deposited me at its station after twenty minutes' ride from Moulins—I sought the abbey church of quiet little Souvigny, the burial-place of the ducal house of Bourbon, as St. Denis was of the royal house.

The glimpse caught of the long-roofed structure from the railway was a very agreeable one, so towards what appeared to be a combination of attractions I rapidly made my way up the principal street of the little town to the point where it debouches into the market square, a locality presenting few features of beauty, but one in which the French churches, cathedral, monastic, and parochial, are almost invariably to be looked for.

Shorn of its endowments, serving as the parish church of a town known now to few save the ecclesiologist and historian, and lying as it does off the beaten track, it may truly be said of this once-powerful Cluniac establishment—Ichabod. Yet to a contemplative mind the solitude of the place possesses a charm which trainloads of English and American curiosity-seekers would instantly dispel. For several hours I wandered about its once busy courts, my own footfall and the tolling of the twelve o'clock Angelus alone breaking the awful stillness that brooded over the pile on this hot August day.

Of the extensive buildings which formed this fine abbey but few traces

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remain, and these have been secularised almost beyond recognition. The church, stripped of its ancient furniture, has, however, come down to us—thanks, in some measure, to its having been labelled as an historic monument—in a very good state of preservation. It is, moreover, of very great value to the architectural student, presenting as it does a mingling of the Burgundian, the Frankish, and the Southern styles.

Upon the original Romanesque work, which, like all that met with in central and southern France, has a very Byzantine tendency, much of a late period has been ingrafted and super-imposed. These extensive alterations appear to have been effected towards the middle of the fifteenth century, curiously enough not in Flamboyant, the then reigning style, but in Middle Pointed of a more Geometrical character. This, as might be expected from its date, is in some details poorly worked, but it possesses a great, I may say unique, interest.

Viewed from the railway the long unbroken line of roof gives the church of Souvigny an air of almost barn-like simplicity; but this idea is dispelled on placing yourself at the north-west corner of the market-place, whence the eye ranges from the plain, low Romanesque towers along the six-bayed nave with its low Decorated clerestory, past the transepts, to the choir flanked by the ducal chapels and terminating in a buttressed chevet of impressive but not exaggerated dimensions. Calm repose—resulting from its length, the low stature of its western towers, and the manner in which the roof is carried on without any break at the crux, the transepts being roofed at a somewhat lower level—is, then, the characteristic feature of the abbey at Souvigny.

Before the Middle Pointed alterations and additions the western towers must have assumed an air of much greater dignity and importance than they do now. Built of brownish stone, and capped with low pyramidal roofs of tiles, they presented, with a background of deep blue sky, quite an Italian appearance, particularly when viewed from a slight eminence to the north of the town.

The Romanesque nave, with its double aisles, was a truly welcome refuge from the midday glare and heat. Entering from the large square on the north by a door at its eastern extremity, I found myself in the outer north aisle of the nave, long, regular, and resembling in its superb vaulting, and in the sumptuous sculpture of its elongated pier capitals—veritable types of Burgundian richness—another great Cluniac church whose acquaintance I was looking forward some day to make—Vézelay.

Let us take our stand at this door for a few moments immediately upon entering. We have on our right the long, speluncar northern aisle, terminating westward in the reredos-like shrine of St. Menoux. In front of us, with the



THE NAVE, SOUVIGNY

SOUVIGNY

intervention of another very narrow Romanesque aisle, our eyes are drawn upward to the exhilarating light of the Middle Pointed clerestory and vault of the nave, while to our immediate left, as if with the set purpose of striking an architectural contrast to the semi-barbaric decoration of the nave and its aisles, we see across the transept the graceful soaring choir, where the slender pillars, clustering like stems in corn-sheaves, present in the delicate wreathings of their capitals an assemblage of foliated ornament of the most refined character, all the more remarkable when we remember the late period of its execution.

And now, having taken the church in at a *coup d'œil*, let us proceed down the north aisle and place ourselves at the extreme west end of the nave, under the tall, good-looking organ, which, with its trumpet-blowing cherubim and seraphim surmounting the triple towers to "Great" and "Choir," is no doubt capable of making a deal of noise upon occasions.

The absence of mediæval *instrumenta*, especially of the rood, precludes the interior of Souvigny Abbey, like too many French churches, from being truly pictorial. Although it is one of the largest ecclesiastical buildings in the province of Sens, covering as it does a considerable expanse of ground, it is by no means colossal. Indeed, I was disappointed with the chevet, having formed a somewhat extravagant notion of it from a not very faithful drawing in "L'Ancien Bourbonnais." Yet the architect of the Middle Pointed additions and alterations has managed by various expedients, such as the omission of the triforium, the tilting of the vaulting arches, and the employment of the continuous ridge-rib, to invest his interior with an air of great size and elegance.

Throughout the church the carved ornament is distinctly Burgundian, but that delicate *guipure* band which gives such a character to the wall-space round the pier-arches at Autun, Langres, and Vézelay is lacking at Souvigny, where the spandrels of the nave arcade present a somewhat bald and impoverished appearance. The columns supporting the arches are slender attached ones, like those we see in the two great abbeys at Caen; but their capitals retain much more of the Byzantine spirit, their elongated forms giving ample scope for the varied subjects carved upon them. Of these capitals the richest are to be found in each of the outer aisles. As far as the string-course which runs within a few inches of the top of the nave arcades, the original Romanesque vaulting shafts remain. At that point foliated capitals have been engrafted upon them, and thence spring, without the intervention of a capital, the ribs of the nave vaulting, an arrangement imparting an *élancé* air to the whole. The clerestory windows, forming in their lower unglazed portion a species of triforium, unrelieved, however, by an arcading, are of two trefoil-headed lights each, with a quatrefoil in the head,—tracery of a Geometrical character very remarkable when we remember

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that its execution dates from the middle of the fifteenth century—a period which in many parts of France saw the earliest declension to the Renaissance.

As the transverse vaulting ribs give lightness and height to the interior of Souvigny, so the longitudinal ridge-rib, carried throughout nave, transeptal crossing, and choir without break, imparts an idea of great length. This ridge-rib, which at Souvigny is crocketed on both sides, presenting thereby a very pretty feathered appearance, is a feature rarely used by the French architects in their thirteenth- and fourteenth-century buildings.¹ Its introduction, however, at a late epoch was certainly an improvement, as marking the point of the vault. It could not, of course, be used with circular arches where there was no central line for it to mark, and it probably was from this cause that the French seldom adopted it, having been accustomed to vaults not requiring the ridge-rib, a feature which in the great English contemporary works is never absent.

Having briefly noticed the main features of interest in the nave of Souvigny Abbey, I will now conduct my readers into the aisles, noticing *en passant* that the floor, composed of tiles in large squares, is, as are the bases of several pillars, green with the saturation of ground-damp. The aisle flanking the nave on either side is very narrow and much loftier than the outer one. Spanned at the interval of each bay by an arch springing on either hand from a tall Romanesque shaft, its simple domical, or, to speak more strictly, barrel-shaped vault, has in many places a very rough appearance. Lower, but more than twice as broad, is each outer aisle. That on the north retains its Romanesque features unaltered, *i.e.* the simple quadripartite ribless vault, spanned at the interval of each bay by arches whose bright, metallic-coloured stones impart a grateful sense of natural polychromy, the long line of wall with its series of arcades on slender pillars, fascinatingly carved as to their capitals, and the simple round-headed window lighting every bay over them. Its neighbour on the extreme south has, however, undergone a complete metamorphosis from the hand of the fifteenth-century architect, vaulting and fenestration being alike Late Gothic. With this one is not disposed to quarrel, since it presents a variety in the perspective views which force themselves upon the attention from every point in this delightful church. The shrine of St. Menoux—once an object of local veneration, shockingly mutilated—forms a very imposing termination to the north aisle looking westward. It consists of two tiers of Byzantine Romanesque arcades of very rich workmanship, surmounted by three figures. The centre one, that of Our Lord, has lost the head, but the cruciform nimbus remains; the standing figure on either side is likewise headless, and so is the seated one, vested in the

¹ It occurs in the Cathedral of Bayonne.

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chasuble, which surmounts another tier of arcades just to the left. Similar fragments exist to the right of the central group.

Occupying a like position at the west end of the outer south aisle is a trefoiled arch, within which is seated another headless figure, chasubled. The folds of the vestments are marvellously natural, while the patterns on the orphreys are reproduced with a delicacy and fidelity that I have rarely seen equalled. Below the figures is a row of six cusped arcades and a very mutilated recumbent effigy. This end of the south aisle forms the baptistry, and in juxtaposition to a bulging octagonal font standing upon the ground, without a pedestal and bearing the date 1626, is the elongated bowl of the mediæval one.

The choir of the abbey church of Souvigny has, like the nave, five aisles. The choir itself, including the chevet, is Middle Pointed of about 1440-46, but the side aisles from which the ducal chapels open, while in the main of the same date, still retain a good deal of their original Romanesque character. Each of the narrow inner aisles of the choir communicates with the procession path or *pourtour*, where the Romanesque work of the radiating chapels is undoubtedly a jejune "restoration." The other aisles, much disturbed by the engraftment of the sepulchral chapels of the Bourbon dukes, are approached from the transepts by pointed arches on very richly sculptured responds. A genuine bit of Burgundian Romanesque work exists in the respond of the arch opening from the north transept, where the fluted pilaster crowned with a Corinthian capital occurs. Through this arch a delightful peep of the Chapelle Neuve is to be obtained from the western end of the north nave aisle; but, owing to a screen which fills up the arch opening into it from the south transept, a view of the Chapelle Vieille is not obtainable from a similar point of the opposite aisle. The said screen resembles in some of its details the celebrated one of Prior d'Estria in the choir of Canterbury Cathedral. Two wooden doors in it admit to the Chapelle Vieille from the south transept. The original Romanesque wall retained in the south side of the chapel is relieved by blind arcades—three of them are those peculiar triangular ones often met with in the neighbouring province of Auvergne, and three are of the customary round-headed form. Through the central one of these latter, and forming part of another exquisite Middle Pointed screen, a doorway is cut, giving access to a smaller chapel or chantry, which at the time of my visit appeared to form a receptacle for sundry pots of "Marguerites" in various stages of decomposition. In the centre of the chapel—scratched and scribbled all over with names and dates, not a few belonging to the seventeenth century, proving that the detestable mania evinced by Tom, Dick, and Harry for leaving their illustrious names on every object within reach is not confined to our own day—are the two contiguous altar-tombs, with recumbent

effigies in marble, of Louis II, Duc de Bourbon, and Anne of Auvergne, his wife. A Flamboyantly traceried window in this chapel has some worthless modern stained glass in the "pretty picture" style. It was quite a relief to turn from this sickly specimen to the noble, but alas! sadly fragmentary, remains of fifteenth-century glass in the clerestory of the great chevet, whose series of five arches on cylindrical piers are very acutely pointed and rather triangular in their aspect. To the east and west sides of the pillars a slender shaft is attached, serving for the main ribs of the apse groin and those of the circumambient aisles respectively. Their caps are foliated, though not by any means so delicately as are those of the arcades on either side the choir proper, where the reproduction of the natural flora is marvellous when the late period of its execution is taken into consideration. But to return to the apse. There is no triforium—a feature conspicuous by its absence throughout the building—the tall, two-light windows of the clerestory rising, with the intervention of a deep sill only, immediately above the string-course surmounting the pier arches.

In his excessive desire to do away with all solid wall, and to get the greatest possible surface for painted glass, the architect of the chevet at Souvigny has made the two trefoiled lights of his windows very tall, and has placed the smallest of quatrefoiled circles in the head of their arches, besides piercing the spandrels of the vault with tracery, which, at a little distance, owing to the low point at which the main ribs begin to spring, have quite the air of the flying buttresses on the exterior of Henry VII's Chapel at Westminster.

That the apse vault at Souvigny is distorted in order to produce this air of *légèreté* is a fact no one who has the greater sobriety of the early French vaulted apses in his mind will attempt to controvert; yet it is impossible to deny the elegance of this invention, which has, I believe, found few admirers or imitators.¹ Doubtless, while the painted glass which once filled these windows, and of which scanty but beautiful fragments still remain to attest its former grandeur, remained intact, the ideas of its architect were seen to far greater advantage than at present in this apse at Souvigny.

There is, however, enough glass left in these windows for us to judge of the magnificent spectacle the eastern part of the church must have presented before the destruction of its vitreous decoration; for the rich rubies and blues in the vestments of the Apostles, which fill the two northern windows of the five-sided chevet, still retain their jewel-like brilliancy of colouring, contrasting vividly with the *grisaille* of the backgrounds and canopies. Except for a very small piece

¹ It occurs in the church of St. Mary-on-the-Hill at Herford in Westphalian Prussia, to whose square east-end the architect has given a quasi-apsidal appearance by the vaulting, and is not an uncommon feature in Spanish architecture.

here and there, the southern windows are entirely denuded of their precious adornment; but this loss is, on a fine day, somewhat compensated for by the very pretty picture presented by a sun-gilded pinnacle and flying buttress which, with a background of blue sky, peer through the unstained windows on this side of the apse in the most enchanting manner.

The three bays on the south side of the choir are all of the same height, but above the central one the clerestory is omitted. This feature is likewise wanting above the corresponding arch on the north side, which is thrown up far above the one on either side of it, in order to bring it to the same level as the arch opening from the first narrow north aisle of the choir into the elegant Gothic Chapelle Neuve, with its recumbent effigies of Duc Charles and his wife Agnès de Bourgogne. The style of this chapel,¹ which is much loftier than the Chapelle Vieille, and terminates in a three-sided apse, is very good Flamboyant, the windows, which occur only in its central compartment, being tall ones of two trefoiled lights. Over them are hung blinds, in many places going to rags, and having upon them frightful "Gothic" patterns such as one sees on wall-papers in seaside lodging-houses. As this part of the abbey now forms the Lady Chapel, it is furnished with an altar, and the hideousness of these blinds is in some measure mitigated by bannerets, each with a figure of the Blessed Virgin, bearing such inscriptions as "Mère du Créateur, priez pour nous," "Mère du Sauveur, priez pour nous." The ribs of the apse groin start from rich spiral canopies surmounting small figures in niches between the windows. Some tall net-like screens separate the chapel from the north choir aisle; a large Flamboyantly tracied window, which would look well if filled with stained glass, lights the chapel on the north, and a finely moulded door leads on the left to a chantry, which, like its neighbour on the south side of the Chapelle Vieille, is apparently a receptacle for rubbish.

An extremely devotional adjunct to this chapel is a copy of the celebrated *Immaculate Conception* painted by Murillo for the Church of the Venerables at Seville, now in the Louvre, and for which the French Government in 1852 gave 24,612*l.* In a plain gold frame, and bearing the inscription "Donné par le Roi en 1842," it is suspended on the unfenestrated portion of the apse wall just to the right of the Lady-altar.

There are several other little details in the transepts and nave at Souvigny to which I should like to draw my readers' attention, but as I fear I may have wearied them already, I will just place them with me beneath the western organ gallery, gather once more the long perspective of this interesting abbey church

¹ The illustration shows this Chapelle Neuve in the distance.

into one view, and then pass from its damp, sombre, Romanesque aisles to the warmth and light of the adjacent market square. Here, in front of the west end, helping to compose a picture which Prout would have delighted in, are the many-hued umbrellas of the cheats and bargainers who every now and then, leaving their business to come into the sacred building and pray, admit for a moment a shrill babel of voices, and go out again into the brilliant sunshine to commence cheating and bargaining as before.

The afternoon heat was so intense that, after a modest refecton at an inn facing the abbey church (where the oddest collection of peasantry conceivable were gathered in discussion of a meal dignified by the name of *déjeuner*), I was fain to sit down under a hedge a little way out of Souvigny, book in hand, and forego the treat I had promised myself of seeing a Burgundian narthex and a unique chevet of narrow stilted arches at St. Menoux, distant about four miles. With an alternate glance at the brown stone, red-tile capped towers of the abbey down in the hollow to the left, and the pages of one of those delightful Thackerayesque sketches, in which the cloak of humbug and hypocrisy is twitched so forcibly and yet so good-humouredly, the time wore away until—one more stroll round the fascinating abbey having been obtained—I sought the return train for Moulins, at which cheerful little cathedral city I arrived once more, only to discover, to my chagrin, that the last afternoon train for Nevers had departed. However, I consoled myself with recollections of the very jolly looking old Lady Abbess who had been my travelling companion during the twenty minutes' ride, and who had addressed some remark of polite conventionality in response to my salute on entering the carriage, but the import of which I had been unable to divine owing to the noise and bustle attendant upon the departure of the train. However, I had bowed, looked pleasant, and made up for my seeming discourtesy by assisting her, on arrival at Moulins, with her packages; of which she had a great assortment in all shapes and sizes, including a bonnet-box—I opined it held her best "coif"—and a "Gampy" umbrella, a downright useful alpaca affair tied round the middle with a piece of string. She was met at the entrance to the platform at Moulins by another Mother Superior, very grand and stately; and together they entered a small donkey-chaise, in which they drove off into the city in a cloud of dust with an air that the most expert "whip" might have envied. As I wandered back to my hotel I recalled the following passage from Southey with reference to this devoted body of women: "Two of them (for they generally go in couples) set out on their charitable mission. Wherever they go their dress protects them. Even more enlightened persons than the common peasantry hail it as a happy omen when on a journey a *Sœur de la Charité* happens to travel with them, and instances are recorded in which their presence has saved

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travellers from the attacks of robbers. During the Revolution they were rarely molested, being the only religious order permitted to wear their dress and pursue their vocation."

I much regretted not having prolonged my stay in Souvigny, so as to have visited St. Menoux, but contrived in one way or another to occupy the evening at Moulins, so that it passed away with as much expedition as could reasonably be hoped for, a capital band on the boulevards contributing materially towards this result, besides affording an excellent opportunity for observing the diversions of the Moulinais. The cathedral and church of the Sacré Cœur both remaining open until quite a late hour, I sat about in them, much admiring the fine effect produced in the latter by the setting sun, which, streaming through the windows of the apse,¹ flooded the choir with gorgeous colours, the opposite end of the building being left in gloom. Wishing to get a clear morning for visiting the various objects of interest in Nevers, and seeing nothing in Moulins to warrant prolonging my stay there, I took advantage of the Paris express which passed through at eleven o'clock. Soon we were flying through the silent night, a galaxy of lights relieving the monotony now and again as the train ran screaming through a station. After an hour's run, with a stop of a few minutes only at Saincaize, the junction for Bourges, the express dashed across the Loire, and on the stroke of midnight, with the lamps of the stone bridge at a little distance "quivering" with solemn effect in the stream, rattled into the dimly lighted station at Nevers. Glad I was, after hurrying along the platform, tenanted only by a few sleepy-eyed children gnawing their way through indigestible-looking buns, to find an hotel omnibus drawn up outside the door of exit, to throw myself into the remotest corner of the vehicle, which—the horse doubtless wanting to get home to its bed—thundered off into the city like a fire-engine at full gallop. Past the cathedral, looming large against the midnight sky, it tore; threaded several tortuous streets; rumbled under the Porte de Paris, and finally deposited me at an excellent hostel, whose night porter was sitting up in expectation of late arrivals.

¹ This church, it will be remembered, being disorientated. I have previously remarked upon the strictness of the Germans with regard to orientation. A remarkable evidence of this is presented by Magdeburg Cathedral, the altars in its apse being all placed with their fronts facing due west, and cutting therefore in the oddest way across all the main architectural lines of the building. At Osnabrück the processional aisle was secured in a singular manner. It appears from an inspection of the ground plan that the choir was originally square-ended and aisleless, while from the eastern side of either transept an apse projected. In the Complete Gothic period, when the Germans abandoned their national style to take up that of France, these transeptal apses were removed, and a couple of chapels thrown out from an aisle which was built round the back, and along the sides of, the choir, without however disturbing the original ground plan of the choir, the side walls not being even pierced to open into these ambulatories.

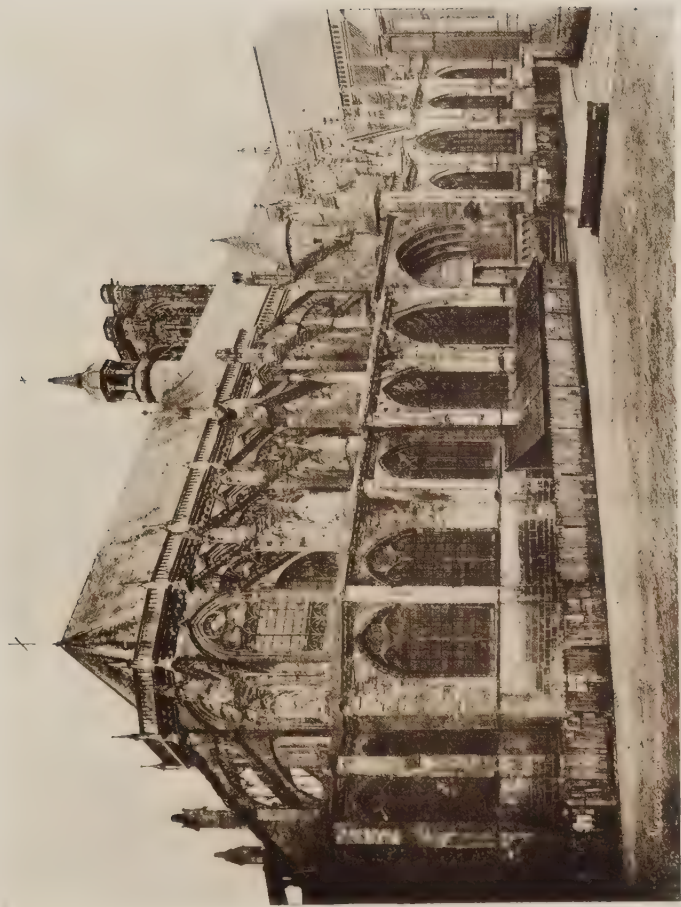
CHAPTER XXIII

NEVERS

NINE o'clock on a glorious sunshiny August morning, and the *enfants du chœur* of St. Cyr's Cathedral at Nevers, in scarlet and white, are tripping down that spiral staircase which Professor Willis has referred to as so remarkable a specimen of "interpenetration." Arrived in the great western transept, they proceed, after a little preliminary skirmishing, towards the choir, where several vicars-choral have already taken up their stations by the great books, ready to commence the Morning Offices. These are sung unaccompanied, but with much solemnity to the old Plain Chant, which sounds, as always, very soothing and restful as I steal softly round the processional aisle behind the high altar. Here, while lighting their candles preparatory to the commencement of the Canon of the Mass, two of the aforementioned small individuals—who, by the way, take a ritualistic rather than a musical part in the function—indulge in a little diverting by-play with the lucifer matches, luckily screened from the eye of the officiating priest by the retable and its ornaments. I then resume my seat at the summit of the flight of steps leading from the floor of the vast Middle-Pointed church to its Romanesque western apse, upon whose conch is depicted a grand Byzantine Majesty, still looming through the veil of whitewash which, as far as practicable, has been removed from it.

Although Nevers Cathedral is wanting in some of those accompaniments which are the glories of its northern sisters, it is unquestionably a noble edifice, and must take high rank among French churches of the second class from the excellence of its east end, from the grace of its solitary tower, and from the imposing solemnity of its western crypt and apse. The latter is a feature rarely if ever met with in France, but of frequent occurrence in Germany, as, for instance, in the cathedrals of Bamberg, Naumburg, Mayence, Worms, and Treves, and in the abbatial churches of Gernrode and Laach.

Nevers Cathedral is, perhaps, hardly lofty enough for its width, which was doubtless dictated by that of the Romanesque western apse, and, like its



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neighbour, Bourges, has no transepts ;¹ otherwise it is of the customary French arrangement. The choir, contained beneath the same line of roof, but having its clerestory wall a little higher than that of the nave, declines considerably to the south, and the florid Gothic tower stands just to the east of what must be looked upon rather as a gigantic narthex than a western transept. This forms, with the apse and crypt beneath it, the only portion of the original Romanesque church built by Hugh II, the date of which may be fixed at 1028.

It would appear that the cathedral of St. Cyr at Nevers was originally a church of that Romanesque type met with in the neighbouring province of Auvergne, as at Issoire and elsewhere. The whole of this Romanesque church, with the exception of the portions above mentioned, was swept away to make room for the present great Middle Pointed building, in which, while it presents certain details of the Burgundian school, the great Frankish influence is felt—notably in the graceful corona of chapels encircling the apse.

The three-aisled crypt of the eleventh century beneath the western apse is, like the coeval one of St. Germain at Auxerre, very solemn and awful ; indeed, it was quite a relief to emerge from its speluncar shade into the lightsome lantern-like upper church, whose beauties gradually unfolded themselves as I once more seated myself in the western apse, and took in the whole of its transeptless length, terminating in the modern Gothic baldacchino, at one glance. Six bays are assigned to the nave, that to the east being much wider and higher than the others. All are good Early Middle Pointed, and support a triforium of much elegance. This is composed of a series of trefoiled arcadings, the base of each shaft resting upon the caryatid figure—if such an expression can be used in describing a Gothic church—of a saint.

The clerestory windows are large ones of two broad lancets under a depressed arch, like those in the same situation at St. Pierre, Chartres, each having by way of tracery a lozenge-shaped piercing in the head. As there is but little stained glass, the flood of light poured in through these great windows gives to the church—at any rate to the eye of the visitor with the storied solemnity of Bourges, Chartres, Auxerre, and Troyes fresh in his mind—an air of coldness, intensified by the scraping to which the whole interior has been subjected of late years.

The choir of four bays is tolerable Late Middle Pointed, but its circumambient aisles and chapels are gems of thirteenth-century work. Perhaps the most graceful feature of the choir is its glazed triforium, which, like that at Tours,

¹ The omission of transepts is evidently a "localism." Compare Varzy, Clamecy, and the more distant seventeenth-century church of St. Pierre at Auxerre.

Metz, Troyes, St. Ouen at Rouen, and other examples, is a continuation downwards of the clerestory. All the windows in the eastern apse are filled with modern stained glass—pleasing as a whole, but lacking distinctness from the smallness and the multiplicity of the subjects which are placed in medallions, as well as from the preponderance of blue.

The chapels radiating from the procession path are, as I have mentioned above, the best thirteenth-century work, and the detail, especially that of the foliated ornament, is executed with the utmost care. "On y reconnaît," remarks that graceful writer *Elisée Reclus*, "tous les feuillages de nos bois, et de nos champs, la feuille de chêne, de peuplier, de roseau, de chardon-frisé, etc. ; la perfection de l'imitation, et la finesse de travail, sont réellement admirables." This same fidelity to nature is observable in the foliated capitals to the pillars of the great north door, by which the cathedral is usually entered from the city. "Les archivoltes des portes," continues the same author, "attestent également la patience et l'adresse des ciseleurs du xv^e siècle."

Each of these radiating chapels at Nevers has five windows of two lights each, their tracery, like those in the clerestory of the apse, where it is composed of three large trefoils, being in the Geometrical phase of Decorated.

As in the neighbouring cathedral of Moulins, the high altar and its accessories at Nevers has been restored in the mediæval style, piscina and credence being duly provided.

The mensa of stone rests upon six small pillars, but, unlike that at Moulins, is destitute of frontal. There is a very pretty stepped predella with small carved subjects from the Passion, and this supports the crucifix and candlesticks. Over all rises a baldacchino, similar in *motif* to that in the cathedral at Moulins, but of stone, and exclaiming loudly, as does the whole of the stonework, for the polychromatic decoration which, I was informed, it was intended to apply to it. Each side of the baldacchino has a trefoiled arch beneath a gable, and from its low roof sprouts an open-work spirelet. A rood-beam sustaining a crucifix spans the arch of the apse immediately in the rear of this baldacchino.

At the time of my visit all the furniture of the church was in a condition of chaos, but it, was pleasurable to observe, *in situ*, the old Grecian stalls with high wainscotted backs relieved by Corinthian pilasters.

While sitting at the top of the steps leading to the western apse, a *Sœur de la Charité* directed my attention towards a small door just to the left of the space in which the altar stood, so, thinking that in all probability it conducted to some interesting and as yet unexplored part of the cathedral, I passed through it, only to find myself in a long, barn-like room which, fitted with sash windows of the most domestic description and tricked out with bannerets and bits of



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calico, looked the very picture of a "rag fair." To whom it was dedicated I did not pause to inquire, but after one glance of disgust around, tempered by the consolatory reflection that such a display of motley was not allowed to intrude upon the cathedral proper, I turned and fled towards that typical church of the Auvergnat Romanesque, St. Étienne, noticing, by the way, the fine grouping of the apse of the cathedral with its solitary steeple. This last stands on the east side of the south-west transept, and is of a type rather common in this part of France—Clamecy and St. Pierre at Auxerre possessing very similar ones. Of two epochs, this tower at St. Cyr, Nevers, is very striking in its outline. The lowest part, which reaches to the top of the clerestory, and presents a double series of trefoiled arcades, belongs to the close of the fourteenth century; the second portion, dating 1509-28, is almost covered with niched statues of saints; the highest, or belfry stage, has one window of two lights in each face, and is surmounted by a very graceful pierced parapet. There is a turret at the north-west corner, but no spire or capping of any kind, and an effect of combined elegance and solidity is imparted to the mass.

A saunter through a variety of quaint and unexpected by-ways brought me to the church of St. Étienne. It is cruciform, perfectly regular, has the eastern apse and two side ones radiating from the procession path; a low tower (longer from north to south than from east to west), and surmounted by a stunted octagon; a western narthex to its nave, and all those details which have as distinct and marked a tradition of their own as those met with in the Romanesque of the Rhine, Normandy, Pisa, or Lombardy.

Much of the beautiful local colouring of St. Étienne externally has been lost by merciless flaying, which process the west front was, in 1894, undergoing. The three Romanesque arcades at its summit were then untouched, but I trembled for their safety. In their unrestored condition they were a poem. From the east side of either transept projects an apsidal chapel, which, taken in conjunction with those radiating from the procession path, the red-tiled roofs and the small arcades relieving the wall of the apse clerestory just under the eaves like the Rhine churches, help to compose a very pleasing but by no means gigantic group. A painting of 1609 suspended in the church shows the central tower surmounted by a very tall octagonal spire of four stages; of this the base, relieved on its cardinal sides by arcading, alone remains.

Internally, St. Étienne forms a striking contrast to the delicacy of detail and luminousness which characterise St. Cyr. Here all is sternness and simplicity, allied with solemnity, owing to the modicum of light which the round-headed windows admit. A peculiar feature here, as in many Romanesque churches of the Auvergnat type, is the arch opening into the transept—not the

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one at the crux, but that which is on a level with the walls of the aisles—a feature rendered necessary by the elongation of the tower from north to south. At St. Étienne this arch is pitched low, the wall-space between it and the transept roof being pierced with five arcades. And here is another feature of this peculiar type of Romanesque, *i.e.* the blind arcading in the north and south walls of the transepts, where a straight-sided arch occurs between two circular ones.

The apsidal chapel opening from the north transept retains its original features, *i.e.* three Romanesque windows within arcades upon shafts with thick square caps. The chapel opening from the opposite transept is a restoration, replacing a later one, and therefore less interesting. The choir has five very narrow and stilted arches, the semi-dome of its apse being quite plain. Beneath the tower the *chorus cantorum*, with passable woodwork of the last century, is formed.

Another walk round the spacious aisles of the cathedral, and it is time to start upon the first stage of the route homewards.

Trains on the line between Nevers and Auxerre—*viâ* Clamecy, where I propose breaking the journey—not being frequent, that starting from the former at five o'clock is somewhat inconveniently crowded.

Urzy, Guérigny, Poiseux, Prémery, Arzembourg, Corvol d'Embernard, and Varzy—the last with its fine twin-steeple but transeptless church—are in turn passed by this most sluggish train, towards whose depopulation each village contributed its quota, attended by much scrunching of saboté feet on wet gravelled platforms, and much difficulty in putting up of serviceable-looking gig umbrellas. Clamecy is reached at 7-15, by which time the drizzling rain had developed into a good steady downpour. A small omnibus from the hotel is drawn up outside the station, but finding that it is in waiting for the "down" train from Auxerre, I appropriate an old brougham and drive off in it to my hostel, in whose *salle à manger* I am presently engaged in discussing a solitary but excellent dinner, hazarding many conjectures as to the ecclesiastical character of that apartment, in each angle of which is a cluster of Romanesque shafts.¹

Early the next morning—a blustering morning, with the sun struggling to pierce the heavy masses of clouds, and the Yonne tumbling angrily along under the bridges of the little Burgundian town—I visit the church at Clamecy, a transeptless structure in vigorous and very Early Pointed, with a Late tower similar in outline to that at Nevers standing outside the line of the south aisle, and a square circumambient-aisled east end like Moulins.

Then came a somewhat hurried journey back to England, *viâ* Auxerre and

¹ It formed part of L'Eglise de Bethléem, as I learned subsequently.

NEVERS

Sens, from which latter, by rising at an abnormally early hour, I had hoped to reach Paris in good time to catch the tidal train for Dieppe, but alack, alack!—

“The best laid schemes o’ mice an’ men
Gang aft agley.”

Mine was successful as far as it went, but no further. The *décrotteur* of the hotel at Sens roused me in excellent time, for the rays of the newly-risen sun were stealing up the tower of the cathedral as I stood on the platform of the railway station, and the train reached the terminus of the Lyons Railway at Paris to the minute. Chartering one of those victorias in which you can skim so pleasantly about the brilliant Lutetia, I directed the driver to head for the Gare St. Lazare, and the vehicle had passed the Jardin des Plantes when I intimated my desire to to catch the aforementioned tidal train. “Ah Monsieur! c’est trop loin, tu n’auras pas le temps!” At this moment the bells of Notre-Dame began to send their voices over Paris for the Matutinal Offices. This, and the prepossessing early morning aspect of what Mrs. Skewton called “that delightfulest of cities,” decided me; so, dismissing the vehicle, whose Jehu doubtless considered me a great “booby” for having—to use a Johnsonian expression—“managed myself so ill,” I made for the nearest telegraph office, despatched a message to expectant relatives, and then with a mind more at ease seated myself at one of those captivating little *al fresco* tables pertaining to a café hard by Notre-Dame. Here I made a light meal, left knapsack and portfolio in charge of the “good people of the house,” and shortly after half-past nine entered the nave of the vast Early Gothic basilica, just as a magnificent Voluntary between Terce and Canons’ Mass pealed from the organ in the choir, the officiants, in gorgeous eucharistic vestments of crimson and gold, entering at the same moment from the sacristy.

I much enjoyed the Plain Chant at Mass, seating myself in one of a very empty collection of chairs in front of the choir gate. Indeed, here I constituted, as I have so frequently done in France, the congregation, the more frequented part being the *pourtour* of the choir, where this morning there was a fair sprinkling of the faithful, sightseers being allowed, very mistakenly, I think, to prowl about during this most solemn of all Offices.

A long morning in what there is left of the old quarter of Paris, exploring the ecclesiastical treasures of St. Étienne du Mont, St. Eustache, St. Séverin, St. Médard, and others, and I return to Notre-Dame for Vespers and the lesser Offices which precede and follow it.

This time I do not enter the choir but remain in the nave, leaning against the pillars and finding out fresh beauties in this wonderful edifice at every point. Most impressive is the flood of organ and chant as it steals about the double aisles, and the effect of a solitary treble voice, softly accompanied on the organ

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in the versicle following *Nunc Dimittis*, "In manus Tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum," forms a peculiarly solemn and restful ending to the day's services.

With this and the melody of the concluding antiphon, "Salva nos, Domine, vigilantes: custodi nos dormientes," I emerge once more into the brilliant sunshine of Place and Boulevard.

Bending my steps northward this time, I seek Hittorff's *Early Restoration* basilica of St. Vincent de Paul, and sit awhile in its impressive triple-aisled nave, whose columniation is divided into two orders—Ionic below, Corinthian above—by a frieze like, but much loftier and more important than, the gallery front of Wren's churches, as e.g. St. Andrew's, Holborn, and St. James's, Piccadilly. As in these two examples, the constructional gallery at St. Vincent de Paul forms a noble feature. Taking as his *motif* S. Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna, Hippolyte Flandrin covered this space, which is equivalent to the triforium of a legitimate basilica, with long processions of saints on a gold ground—all reverently trending towards the high altar.

One hundred and fifty in number, and branching off right and left in two groups from an altar painted in the centre of the western frieze, which in that portion of the church forms the front of the organ loft, these figures seem to advance towards the Session in Majesty filling the conch of the apse—the work of Picot, but not comparable with Flandrin's noble procession.

A somewhat serious drawback to the otherwise fine interior of St. Vincent de Paul is the expedient adopted by the architect to obtain space for his apse. Making the extremity of the radius not the pillars of the nave but those between the inner and the outer aisles, he has caused his inner aisle to discharge itself suddenly into the apsidal hemicycle—a contrivance which cannot but be regarded as theatrical, and totally upsetting the gravity of basilican architecture.

From the west end of the church this arrangement does not force itself unpleasantly upon the view, but within the apse the effect is ruinous.

Putting aside this drawback, St. Vincent de Paul must be reckoned the most impressive and religious modern church interior that Paris possesses, and it formed a fitting *comble* to a tour which had embraced so many grand and varied specimens of French ecclesiastical architecture.

CHAPTER XXIV

NEUCHÂTEL, ST. GERMER, AND BEAUVAIS

IT was certainly a novel experience, the finding oneself dropped from the train at a quarter-past seven o'clock on a Sunday morning just as the bells from the picturesquely unfinished steeple of the church at Neuchâtel-en-Bray were calling folks to early Mass.

Leaving town on the evening of a Saturday, I reached Dieppe at four o'clock on the next morning to find its streets untenanted save by sundry cats, who, from their dissipated appearance, had been holding festival all night. Entering Dieppe at this early hour the familiar sights and sounds were, of course, not in evidence.

The pier had not its complement of elegantly dressed and parasoled ladies telegraphing to their friends on board, and waving their handkerchiefs at the vessel as though they were dusting it at a distance. Neither did I hear the shrill cries of hawkers, nor the plaintive pipe of the vendor of goats' milk as he traversed the stony streets with his long-haired flock. But a certain solemnity invested the steamer's gliding into the smooth water of the harbour between the two great crucifixes at this July Sunday daybreak, when even the noises—without which the French can do nothing—in and about the *douane* seemed set in a more subdued key than at other times. All the still-life of the place—not forgetting the smells, which were, if anything, more unpleasant than usual—was, of course, just the same.

There were the great white cliffs, along whose summits glorious walks, with a cobalt sky above and a sapphire sea below, had on former visits been taken, and upon whose eastern range stands that votive church which looks this morning a thought more melancholy than usual. It is just such a church as one might expect a Chinaman to produce after sixth months' study of "Winkles' Cathedrals."

There, westwards, was the lace-like tower and quaint central slate cupola of St. Jacques, whose "peaceful gates" even at this early hour expanded to all. Farther on and I arrived at St. Remi, in one of whose straight-backed, doored pews—having an hour or so to spare before a train could be got on to Neuchâtel

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—I ensconced myself; and here a ludicrous incident would force itself upon the memory.

One Sunday, a year previously, I had chanced to stroll into this quaintest of old Normandy churches just as High Mass was concluding.

While the *sortie* was being played upon the fine-looking organ at the west end of the church, the choir boys were, prior to dismissal, drawn up in double file in the centre of the spacious choir, and a very picturesque group they formed with the surroundings.

One of the urchins was being reproved by the *magister choralis* for some delinquency or other, so upon dismissal he in revenge "took a sight" at the learned gentleman, and with such an air of cool bravado, that it was all I could do to avoid laughing aloud.

On the same occasion—the scarlet cassocked and albed flock having taken their departure—it was not a little diverting to observe the stony gaze with which some soldiers, waiting for the Messe du Midi, regarded the books handed to them by the sacristan much in the same manner as I have observed the god-fathers and godmothers in the "humbler walks of life" do at baptisms among ourselves.

Repairing to the railway terminus I booked, amid a little string of equally early folks, for Neuchâtel.

The train proceeded in that leisurely fashion common to slow ones in France, but time, on this occasion, being no object it enabled one to enjoy more thoroughly the pretty pastoral Pays du Bray, nor was it by any means unpleasant to step, if only for a moment, out of the carriage when the train came to a standstill at some village station and to hear such names as Rouxmenil, Arques-la-Bataille, and so on called out, with a dwelling on the ultimate, upon this sunny butterfly-hovering and bee-humming Sunday morning.

The bells then were ringing for Mass in the picturesque old western steeple of Neuchâtel church as I walked through the streets of that quiet little orchard-embosomed town in quest of some refreshment for the inner man. Despite the early hour, this was obtained without any difficulty at a humble inn, whose proprietress was then in the *papillote* stage of costume, though, no doubt, towards evening, when she would gracefully incline her head in response to the ten-centime piece dropped "*pour le garçon*" into the silver vase on the counter, she would present a very different appearance.

Thus fortified and refreshed I resumed my walk through the town to the parish church, which occupies a commanding situation at the top of the main street, down whose kennels water was copiously rushing. A well-attended Low Mass being then in progress, I was constrained to defer my inspection of the

church's interior to a more favourable opportunity. However, in strolling about the roads surrounding the town, with their fringe of fruit-laden orchards, the intervening time passed pleasantly enough.

The eastern portion of the church at Neuchâtel is fine Early Pointed, but the "restorer" has, perhaps, done mischief more tragic than utter ruin. Inside, the choir has a noble arcade of thick cylindrical columns with stiff-leaved capitals, a simple triforium of trefoiled arcades, and a lofty clerestory with windows composed of two uncusped compartments apiece, and with tracery formed of three trefoils. M. Didron's stained glass, which fills all these windows, is brilliant but ineffective at a distance, from the absence of that important factor, *grisaille*, to give proper definition to the full-length effigies therein depicted. Like many of the Burgundian examples I had seen, the apse of Neuchâtel church was destitute of procession path, but the three tiers of windows lighting it give this portion of the building an air of great luminosity. The arches opening into what were originally north and south transepts appeared to be Transition, but the tower which they support is only just distinguishable externally, for when the present western steeple was built it seems to have been much tampered with, having been removed down to the clerestory and roofed over in the same line as the choir and the nave. The latter is a wretched perpetration of the Late Flamboyant age, with thick clumsy pillars in feeble imitation of those in the choir, and with beggarly roofs to the aisles. But the western steeple is, despite its late date and in the unrestored condition in which I saw it ten years ago, a picture. I remember particularly a lovely piece of reticulated tracery in the tympanum of the west door, to touch which would be madness. The tower proper is surmounted by another very low one of slate, capped with a spire having pinnacles at its base of the same material, the whole helping to compose a really delightful group on this clear August morning.

Looked at from a ritualistic point of view, the morning at Neuchâtel could not, on the whole, be pronounced a success, however interesting it may have been architecturally. Indeed, had I not been prepossessed by the aspect of its tower a year previously during the journey from Dieppe to Beauvais, I should not have stopped here on the present occasion, for the Parish Mass which began, according to the Rouen Use, with a procession, during which some dreary nasal Plain Song was indulged in, was most uninteresting. The vestments of the officiating clergy and the incidental music, accompanied by a worn out old organ in the west gallery, which, by way of *sortie*, struck up the air of "The Harmonious Blacksmith," were also wretched in the extreme. A High Celebration at St. Alban's, Holborn, or St. Matthias', Stoke Newington, has often left a far greater impression.

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Neither Gournay nor the neighbouring St. Germer should be overlooked by the visitor to this delightful part of Normandy. The former has a cruciform collegiate church dedicated to St. Hildevert, of much dignity and interest, but restoration has stripped from the exterior much that was once picturesque. The thirteenth-century façade, with its triplet of lancets, has been flayed to death, but, fortunately, the two western towers, with their quaint louvres and hipped gabled roofs have not been transformed, and I gladly recognised my old friends again from Cotman's illustration of them in Dawson Turner's "Normandy." The interior has a Romanesque arcade of great richness, recalling our Anglo-Norman work, and the upper parts, especially the vaulting, are fine. The east end terminates square, being lighted by a large Geometrically traceried window.

The three great bells in one of St. Hildevert's towers were booming out on the drowsy atmosphere, summoning folks to Vespers, when I once more sought the train. Resuming the journey to Beauvais, the next station passed was St. Germer-en-Fly, whence a pleasant walk through English-like country lanes brought me to the great quondam abbatial church of that saint. The nave, transepts, and choir are Transitional from Romanesque to Pointed, with a few later insertions, but the Sainte-Chapelle, whose plan, disposition, and general arrangement appear to be nearly identical with the destroyed one of St. Germain des Prés at Paris, belongs to the age of St. Louis. To the same architect, Pierre de Montereau, is due the existing Sainte-Chapelle at Paris, which, from its elevation upon an undercroft, is invested with a more *élancé* air than this of St. Germer. Montereau died in 1266, and there is every reason to believe that in this graceful creation of the Early Complete Gothic style at St. Germer we have another design by the same hand—for it was built before his death and is identical in many features with work known to be his. A low cloistered passage, whose window tracery and foliated ornament deserve careful study, connects the Sainte-Chapelle with the circumambient aisle of the abbey church. In the chapel proper the trefoliation of the inner arches of the windows, the easternmost of which are filled with coeval stained glass, while the side ones are simply diapered, forms a strikingly graceful feature. Upon this, again, the "restorer" has laid a far too heavy hand.

It was a charming railway ride on that golden August Sunday evening from Gournay to Beauvais, and grandly the great grey mass of the "tall man on tip-toe," with its forest of flying buttresses, and the familiar outline of its south transept, rose up against the opal-tinted sky, as the train made almost the circuit of the city.

Although two visits had been paid to Beauvais, it was still pleasurable on this Sunday evening not only to make the acquaintance of its hitherto unexplored



LA SAINTE-CHAPELLE, ST. GERMER



ST. ÉTIENNE, BEAUVAIS

NEUCHÂTEL, ST. GERMER, AND BEAUVAIS

byways, the gigantic apse, with its tiers of flying buttresses like scaffoldings, bursting upon the view every now and again with electrical suddenness, but to remark the quiet manner in which the people were walking about enjoying the Sunday evening calm, and affording a marked contrast to that noisy vulgarity too often witnessed on the same occasion in the streets of an English cathedral city.

A strong popular delusion has elevated the naveless cathedral of Beauvais—"a melancholy fragment having no more than a head and arms flung out in despair, like an appeal for ever ignored by heaven," as an imaginative writer has described it—into its great attraction. This must be protested against, not because it is not very wonderful and awe-inspiring—it is both—but because its worship leads people to overlook or only to half see and understand the extreme value of Beauvais' other church, St. Étienne's, to which—the cathedral being closed for the night—I devoted my attention this Sunday evening.

It presents a Romanesque nave and transepts of great beauty; but upon these portions, as is too frequently the case in France, a coarse choir of the Flamboyant age has been rudely engrafted.

Unfortunately its western façade—a graceful specimen of the Lancet epoch—is difficult to be viewed from a distance. As the illustration shows, it has a grand arched doorway. Within the tympanum are sculptures of the Nativity, the Epiphany, and the Coronation of the Virgin, while four rows of angelic and other figures compose the mouldings of its arch.

The jambs and central pier have lost their effigies and shafts, and the whole work is much mutilated, yet of its kind this western portal of St. Étienne's is the best and purest piece of work in Beauvais, as far as goodness of sculpture and detail can make a work good. A triplet of lancets surmounts the gable of this doorway, and a heavy unfinished tower of the Flamboyant period, terminating abruptly in a low balustraded octagon, decidedly Classical, flanks the façade on the north. The general view of St. Étienne's shows it from the north-east, whence the mass presents a singular but not unpicturesque grouping of parts. Nearest to us is the lofty choir, evidently a poor imitation of the Flamboyant portions of the cathedral, with its tall clerestory windows, whose lights and tracery retain a quantity of that sixteenth-century glass which, while it may fail to satisfy the virtuosi whose predilections are for the jewel-like single figure and canopy work of earlier days, has the advantage in that it admits pictures of Scripture scenes. Next we have presented to us the Romanesque northern transept, its gable enriched with that delicate trellis-work so extolled by M. Viollet-le-Duc, and outside the label of the rose window lighting the façade of this transept may be discerned a band of figures, doubtless representing the Wheel of Fortune.

Above the roof-line of the transepts and nave is seen a low central tower, with

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small lancet windows ; but since the addition of the much loftier Flamboyant choir, it appears now only to be a prolongation of that limb westward, the sixteenth-century architect, whoever he was, having carried the heads of his clerestory windows up to the level of those in the tower. A somewhat similar instance of this absorption of Early into Late work, it will be remembered, confronted us in the church at Neuchâtel.

The nave of St. Étienne's at Beauvais has a low clerestory of round-headed windows, and the buttresses of its aisles are good examples of Late Romanesque work ; but, *pace* the western portal, the external gem of this church is the doorway in the northern aisle—a very ornate specimen of the Round-arched style, of which I am able to give an illustration. The triplet of semicircular arcades above the door has its wall surface diapered with a pattern sunk in the stone and marked at regular intervals by red tiles inlaid, and I should think about two inches square. Presumably this is a restoration ; but, at any rate, as a specimen of externally applied natural polychromy it is particularly grateful and refreshing to the eye.

There is no service in French churches as a rule on Sunday evening, but on this occasion at St. Étienne a procession *aux cierges*, in connection with some guild or other, served to make the evening pass very agreeably.

The church was well filled, and the scene in the Late Romanesque nave—whose arcades, seen in profile, recall those in the Abbaye aux Dames at Caen—was very striking indeed, pendant lamps diffusing their soft radiance around.

Towards the close of a very long sermon the details of the Flamboyant choir, which had hitherto remained shrouded in gloom, began one by one to reveal themselves as the high altar, with its galaxy of candles—indeed, wherever it was possible to stick a candle upon it there one was stuck—began to be lighted up, quite extinguishing the last rays of daylight which had been fitfully struggling through the storied panes of the large east window, a somewhat coarse composition, having its lights surmounted by a large traceried wheel inscribed within a square, and feebly reminiscent of an earlier and purer age.

The sermon ended, a solemn piece was played upon an organ of much sweetness and power in the western gallery, and the illumination of altar and sanctuary being at length accomplished, the procession, composed chiefly of children and young girls started upon its circuit of the church. Marshalled by Sisters, several of them elderly and with most benevolent countenances, and interspersed with banners whose strings some of the most juvenile members were privileged to hold, it did one's heart good to observe the solicitude with which a *religieuse* would now and again adjust a veil that was not quite straight on Marguerite's head, or would steady a taper which Angélique was allowing to come into alarming

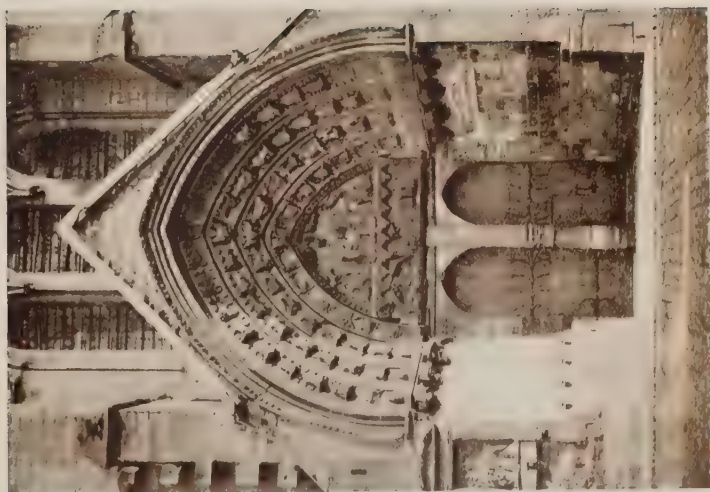


Fig. 1. The facade of the cathedral.

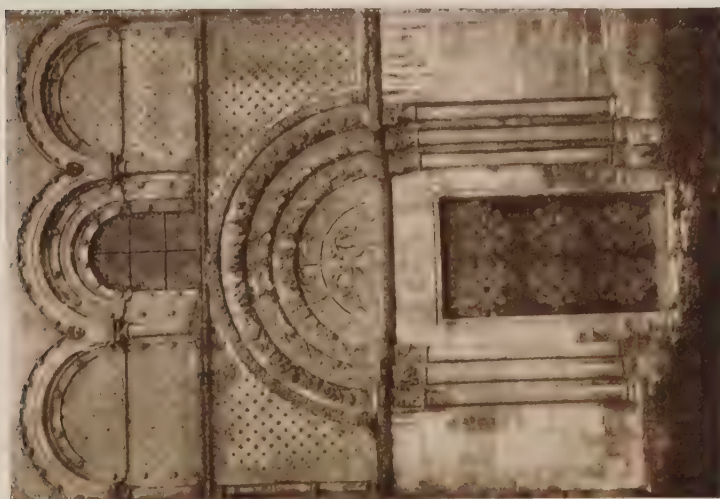


Fig. 2. The interior of the cathedral.

proximity with the coiffure of Henriette, singing away most lustily all the time.

The rear was brought up by the church choir, the cross and taper bearers, and finally by the priest who, vested in a cope that looked as though it would stand upright without him, bore the Host in its glittering monstrance beneath a canopy ; and at intervals, thurifers, in scarlet cassocks and transparent cottas, turned round and, dropping on one knee for the purpose, tossed their thuribles towards the Host in a surprisingly adroit manner, while some children added to the picturesque of the scene by scattering flowers. Various pieces of music were sung during the lengthy perambulation of the church : now a short metrical Litany ; anon a hymn to a good swinging Gallican tune—none of that lugubrious moaning and groaning of Gregorians, to which I had so frequently been a martyr in Norman church processions, being indulged in on this occasion ; next a Psalm to a very melodious Roman chant ; and lastly the *Miserere* to the same elongated form of the Second Tone—the *Tonus Tristis*—I had heard in St. Pierre at Caen.

Benediction brought this impressive function to a close ; and then after a brilliant *sortie* on the organ, during which chairs were being put back in their places by the parochial Mr. Sownds and Mrs. Miff with, I thought, a good deal of unnecessary noise, I walked back in high good humour with all I had seen and heard to my hotel, from whose windows the polygonal apse of the structure I had just quitted appeared silhouetted with delightful effect against a sky from which the last flush of sunset had barely faded.

Breakfast concluded, on the following morning I repaired to the cathedral in the hope of being privileged to assist in the Capitular Offices, but to my chagrin was informed that, from pecuniary reasons, as usual, their choral rendering had been discontinued.

This must have been but little subsequent to 1887, for on entering this stupendous temple one hot, wet Saturday afternoon in the July of that year, about half-past two, I was, I remember, deeply impressed with the effect produced by the Gregorian chanting *senza organo* at Compline, and especially with the ejaculation with which that Office concludes, “*Salva nos, Domine, vigilantes ; custodi nos dormientes : ut vigilemus cum Christo, et requiescamus in pace.*”

As for an accompanied service in Beauvais Cathedral, it has never been my fortune to hear one, but its effect must, I opine, be grand in the extreme.

It is, perhaps, presumption to criticise such a work as this, yet it is impossible not to divest oneself of the idea that the cathedral of Beauvais is a building in which an artist has striven after more than he can possibly attain.

A glance at the apsidal chapels convinces us that it was originally planned on a scale which, though grand, was by no means exaggerated ; but when the desire

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for emulating the neighbouring cathedral of Amiens became too strong to be resisted, a triforium and clerestory were raised on the arches opening to these chapels in order that the vault of the circumambient aisle might reach the increased height of the great choir arcades upon which was reared a clerestory reaching to the unprecedented height of 157 feet.¹ Commenced in 1225 and consecrated in 1272, Beauvais choir fell twelve years afterwards—punishment brought on by that “vaulting ambition which overleaps itself and falls on the other side.”

Looked at in this light one is not surprised, especially on examining the arches of the choir, to find a building so unworthy of its age—the palmist one of French architecture. Here the main object of the architect seems to have been the attainment of height and airiness at the expense of everything else, many of the details being coarse and even slovenly in execution. In order to remedy its defects after the fall the three arches on either side of the choir were subdivided into six, and from the great size of the piers and the narrow span of the arches, the present effect of the interior of this choir, sublime at a first glance, is one in which the arches have little to do, and in which much beauty has been sacrificed in order to keep the vault from falling in again. In the portion of unrelieved wall between the tops of the six arches and the triforium string course, traces of the three original ones are plainly distinguishable.

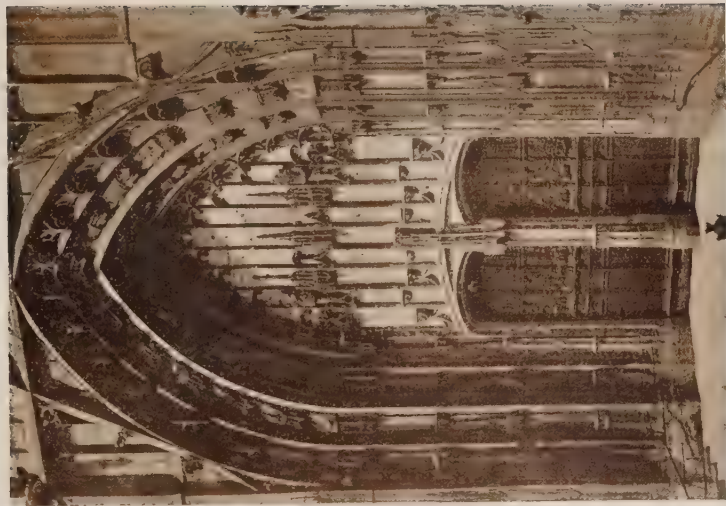
The best work in the cathedral is, as may be guessed from its date, in the apsidal chapels and the eastern aisle of either transept, which is good early thirteenth-century. The upper portions of the transepts were not begun until the commencement of the sixteenth century,² and one bay of the nave had been projected when, on the completion of the transepts, whose works dragged on for more than fifty years, it was abandoned for the erection of a central steeple which should rival the dome of St. Peter's in height. Finished in 1568, this

¹ The following notes on the chronology of this remarkable edifice, from Pierre Louvet's "Nomenclatura et Chronologia Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Diocesis Beluacensis," 1613, may be quoted: "*Milo de Nantholio Episc.* 1225. Bruslement du chœur de S. Pierre de Beauvais. *Guillemus de Gressio Episc.* 1247-69. Il fist paracheuer le chœur de S. Pierre. *Reginaldus de Nantolio Episc.* 1272. Les chanoines commencent de faire le diuin service au nouveau chœur de luer Eglise Cathédrale. *Theobaidus de Nantholio Episc.* 1284. Grande ruine des voulttes et pilliers du chœur de S. Pierre de Beauvais, de manière que les chanoines y cessèrent le diuin service par le temps de *quarante ans.*" It is not a little curious that Europe's two most stupendous choirs, those of Beauvais and Cologne, should have been completed almost simultaneously, *i.e.* in 1322. During the rebuilding of Beauvais choir the services were held in the Basse Œuvre, of which rude Romanesque building a portion still remains west of the unfinished nave.

² The prelate under whom this gigantic work was begun was Louis de Villers de l'Isle Adam, and Louvet in his "Chronologia" records the "Commencement de la Croisée de l'Eglise Cathédrale de Saint Pierre de Beauvais, 1500." These transeptal façades at Beauvais certainly rank very high indeed among works of their age and class, works in which the hand that achieved the transept of Sens may be traced.



THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE SOUTH-EAST, BEAUVAIS



THE SOUTH DOOR OF THE CATHEDRAL, BEAUVAIS

steeple, in consequence of being built before the nave was there to receive its lateral pressure, lasted but five years. "Le jour de l'Ascension de l'année 1573," relates Bourassé in his "Cathédrales de France," "tandis que le clergé et le peuple étaient en procession dans les rues de la cité, elle s'écroula avec un fracas épouvantable: un épais nuage de poussière couvrit toute la ville. Dès la veille, de tristes indices avaient annoncé le malheur qui devait bientôt arriver: quelques pierres isolées s'étaient détachées du sommet; l'équilibre était rompu; rien ne pouvait arrêter la catastrophe. Le Maître Maçon était monté à l'intérieur de la tour, pour examiner l'état de la muraille; il s'aperçut promptement de l'imminence du danger. Il cria au peuple assemblé dans l'église qu'il eût à se retirer très-promptement. Il n'était pas encore descendu, que l'affreuse chute ébranla toute l'église et répandit la consternation dans les esprits. On se hâta de réparer les dommages occasionnés par ce terrible accident; mais qui eût osé penser à reconstruire cette aiguille prodigieuse? On se contenta d'élever à la place un modeste campanile en bois."

The vault of the south transept, which had suffered most from the fall of this steeple, was restored, and the date of its completion (1593) can be read upon one of the keystones. The works in the nave were resumed, but the treasury was so completely exhausted that they were abandoned. Perhaps this was not altogether to be regretted when the condition of Gothic art at the commencement of the seventeenth century is remembered. However, its completion might have formed a not uninteresting epoch in the history of French architecture, besides enhancing our appreciation of that choir which, despite its faults, can only be gazed upon for the first time with bated breath.

Although vastly inferior to some of her northern sisters in richness and extent of coeval vitreous decoration, Beauvais Cathedral presents the student with a specimen of each of the three great phases through which the art of glass-staining passed.

Of the mosaic style the early thirteenth-century windows of the Lady Chapel are very good examples. In the clerestory of the choir we have an exemplification of that system, which prevailed so extensively in the fourteenth century, of arranging the subjects or figures with a band of rich tinctures about the middle of a long succession of windows, so as to produce a decidedly horizontal line of colour throughout the building, harmonising with and assisting the lines of the architecture. In the present instance this arrangement of a band of canopied figures with white glass above and below¹ is not only productive of a good effect

¹ For a long time after the English Gothic Revival, artists in stained glass perpetuated the fatal mistake of overloading their windows with positive colour. A glaring instance of this was the great south transeptal rose at Westminster, the work of Ward and Nixon in 1847-48, now happily removed.

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in windows at such great height, but gives an idea of strength to the fenestration, which would otherwise have had an attenuated look.

Of stained glass produced at its decline, that in the great transeptal roses at Beauvais is very fine and rich in coloration, and in some points may be compared with that in the transepts at Sens, with which it is almost coeval.

Among the curios brought together in a museum hard by the cathedral, I regarded with melancholy interest a fair embroidered mitre. It belonged to F. de la Rochefoucauld, Bishop of Beauvais at the time of the Revolution, who with his brother, the Bishop of Saintes, the venerable Dulau, Archbishop of Arles, and nearly two hundred non-juring ecclesiastics of every grade, so bravely met death at the hands of a horde of hired ruffians in the convent of the Carmelites at Paris on the night of September 2nd, 1792—a wholesale massacre of which so graphic an account has been furnished by Lamartine.¹

Among pioneers of the Revival, Mr. Butterfield paid great attention to stained glass, and, wherever he could, superintended the execution of windows to be placed in churches of his own design, much in the same way as Pugin did. To this fact, and to his insistence upon white or neutral glass for backgrounds to his figures, the east window of the south aisle at All Saints', Margaret Street, by O'Connor, owes so much of its excellence; also those at the east end of St. Augustine's College Chapel, Canterbury, and St. Matthias', Stoke Newington, by Willement and Wailes respectively. Within the last twenty years a liberal use of white glass has, it is gratifying to notice, grown into favour with the majority of our leading practitioners in the vitreous art, and those wishing to judge for themselves of the sparkling effect produced by a bold employment of *grisaille* balanced by strongly-expressed colours in vigorous contrast, will be gratified by an inspection of such works as the eastern quintuplet of lancets in St. Margaret's, Lee, S.E., the east window of SS. Peter and Paul, Teddington (superintended by the late G. E. Street, R.A.), and those in the clerestory of St. Mary Abbots, Kensington, all the work of Messrs. Clayton and Bell; by that in the northern chapel of All Hallows, Southwark, by Messrs. Burlison and Grylls; and by that with which Mr. J. Ninian Comper has graced the very Early Middle Pointed east window of the College chapel at Brackley, one of the most successful modern works in this style of my acquaintance.

¹ *History of the Girondists*, vol. ii. p. 133. (Bohn's edition.) These three prelates were among that large number who, on their refusal to take the oath to the Constitution in 1790, were deprived of their Sees, and their thrones usurped by bishops irregularly consecrated by Talleyrand. See Chapter VII.

CHAPTER XXV

CIRES-LES-MELLO, CREIL, AND SENLIS

THERE is but little to interest the architectural student on the line of railway between Beauvais and Creil until the station of Cires-les-Mello is reached. But he who is not tied for time or encumbered with luggage may derive much enjoyment from a leisurely journey between the two places by taking the train from Beauvais, alighting at the next station, spending an hour or so in studying Picardian village life, then walking on for a short distance to catch the train at another village station, and so on.

Cirés and Mello, the contiguous villages above alluded to, are each graced by a fine First Pointed church. We will first take that of Mello, which lies to the left of the railway as Creil is approached.

Quite a cathedral in miniature is this church of Mello. Very short but very lofty, it comprises a nave of only two bays, transepts, and choir, seriously encroached upon by some architect of the Flamboyant, and in a heartless sort of manner that is apt to become tiresome in France.

Externally it presents a very noble appearance, its clerestory of tall two-light windows with very rudimentary unfoliated tracery being majestically set off by flying buttresses. The south porch is of exquisite beauty, and the view across the short, lofty church from its inner portal is highly impressive. From the crux rises a light slate-covered *flèche*.

Of the interior detail the most noticeable is a bead-moulding carried round the bases of the columns; but here, as almost universally in France, we are confronted by a coldness arising chiefly from that want of taste (unfortunately too common in that country) in the furniture of the sanctuary. A piece of tapestry costs no more than gaudy painting, and it is to the presence of these rich stuffs, and to those antependia and dossals which in so many instances bespeak the skilful needle, that our Anglo-Catholic altars and their surroundings owe that warmth one vainly looks for in the sanctuaries of some of the largest and most magnificent of French churches.

In this richly churchéd valley of the Oise it is not surprising to find two contiguous French village churches of such dignity and rare architectural interest as

THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

Mello and Cires. The latter, which lies to the right of the line, is less aspiring, but has, I think, more repose. Here I especially noted the fine First Pointed west front, with a porch between its deeply projecting buttresses, whose outer arch assumes that peculiar equilateral form observable in the north transept of Hereford Cathedral. The inner arch has rich mouldings on triple shafts, and within a niche in the tympanum the legend of St. Martin and the beggar is sculptured.

A small Late Gothic tower, with hipped gabled roof of slate, flanks the front to the south. Just behind it is another graceful but very narrow First Pointed porch. Flying buttresses give an air of great importance to this church at Cires, but of the northern clerestory windows, composed of three lancets within a pointed arch, nothing can be seen but their heads, the mullions being overlapped by the lean-to roof of the aisle.

Within, it was delightful to find a nave arcade of much grace, its low cylindrical piers having angle shafts and delicately foliated caps, but whose lower part is unfortunately concealed by wainscot commensurate with the height of the closed pews with which the nave is filled. The original chancel appears to have been replaced by one of debased character and mean dimensions, with a low arch opening into it, the superimposed wall-space being occupied by a large crucifix. But, despite the loss of its choir, there is great picturesqueness in the interior of Cires church, increased by the descent of several steps into the nave from the west and south doors.

The parish church of St. Médard at Creil, although somewhat uncouth in outline, will amply repay a visit, abounding as it does in thirteenth-century detail of the chastest description. The whole interior is most picturesque. A low cavernous-looking nave, seated with open-backed benches, opening into a choir, likewise unclerestoried, but much more elegantly proportioned, and belonging, as it does, to the best age of St. Louis, seemed of a local type, similar choirs rising at the end of more humbly dimensioned naves at the neighbouring churches of Royaumont and Nogent-les-Vierges.

Additional piquancy is lent to the internal *ensemble* of Creil church by the obliquity of its eastern wall, sufficient to admit of three bays on the north side of the choir, whereas the opposite one has but two.

There is a noble Early Pointed western doorway, its mouldings rising from five shafts on either side, but the vault of the porch has disappeared. The tower, of a plain late character but good, has a low crocketed spire, which, together with the high choir, seemed to be a favourite localism.

After a morning spent in Creil for the purpose of visiting a few village churches in its vicinity—Nogent-les-Vierges and Villers St. Paul, each with a

CIRES-LES-MELLO, CREIL, AND SENLIS

charming saddle-back roofed tower, among the number—I had a delightful walk of about seven miles to Senlis, where I was rewarded not only by the beautiful *ci-devant* cathedral of Notre-Dame, but by two other desecrated churches of little inferior interest.

Notre-Dame at Senlis is one of a grand series of buildings, including such examples as the apse of St. Denis, the choir of Notre-Dame, Paris, the cathedrals of Noyon and Sens, the churches of Pontigny, St. Remi at Rheims, Notre-Dame at Châlons, Mantes, and St. Leu d'Esserent, whose erection, each in the provincial style of its locale, spread over the latter half of the twelfth century, was the outcome of that great outburst of enthusiasm for church building which, keeping steadily on during the first half of the thirteenth, culminated in the choirs of Amiens and Rheims, the portals of Chartres, the Sainte Chapelle, St. Urbain at Troyes, and a host of others.

But so completely have sixteenth-century additions and super-impositions altered the original ground plan and character of Senlis Cathedral externally, that at a first glance, and more especially if approached from the south, it would be pronounced a work of the Flamboyant epoch, four of the apsidal chapels and the western façade being now all that can be seen outside of the original twelfth-thirteenth-century church.

Once, however, through the rich sixteenth-century portal of the south transept, one of the best works of its age and class, the grace and refinement of this small but most delightful of Early French Gothic cathedrals comes as a glad surprise to the admirer of traditional Northern Pointed.

The nave, whose curtailment was due to want of funds, has but five bays. the most westerly of which is comprised in the space between the towers; the choir, which terminates in a five-sided apse, has six bays; the transepts two apiece.

Counting from the east, the first two arches on either side of the nave spring from an isolated column. The next, very narrow and stilted, has attached half-columns; the fourth is similar but somewhat wider, and the most westerly is concealed by a heavy stone arch thrown across the nave to support the organ. Throughout the church the triforium consists of a Pointed arch corresponding in width with the bay below. In the nave and transepts Flamboyant balustrades have been inserted within these arches, productive, from certain points, of remarkably beautiful effects. This triforium at Senlis, like those of Noyon and Laon, a feature of great importance, is vaulted, and should be traversed by the visitor desirous of seeing what the plan of the church was like before it was struck by lightning in 1502. To this accident the Late character of the clerestory and vaulting of the whole building is due. The Flamboyant vault, with its ribs dying off into bulky shafts without the intervention of capitals, is remarkably good, as

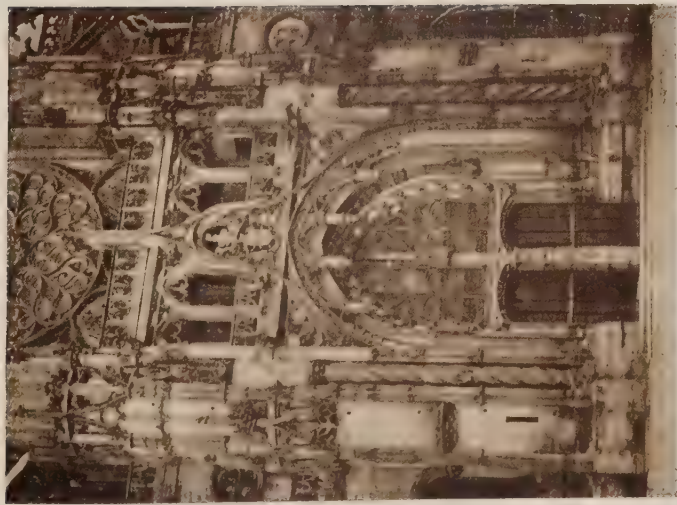
THE GLORIES OF NORTHERN FRANCE

is the Early Pointed vault of the aisles and that of the space between the western towers. The view from the west end of the south aisle should be especially noticed, the bend of the procession path in the distance reminding one very much of Canterbury. In the Flamboyant chapels opening out of this aisle the Perpendicularising tracery of the windows and the large pendant bosses form remarkable features. The northern aisle of the nave, of thirteenth-century date, opens into a wide Flamboyant one with very fine bosses, one of which, representing a crown upheld by angels, is of especial richness and elaboration; while from the summit of a flight of steps at the western end of this outer aisle a truly delightful view of almost the entire church can be obtained. In the two lower stages of its elevation the eastern side of the north transept exhibits early thirteenth-century work, the tribunes being lighted, with happy effect, by sexfoliated circlets. On the western sides the arcades are sixteenth-century work, but the First Pointed tribunes remain. Of the opposite transept the western side is entirely sixteenth-century, as is the principal face of each arm with its graceful rose window. In the southern one is heavy painted glass, blue preponderating; the northern has never received its complement of vitreous decoration. The choir, quite a gem of the Transitional period, is of six bays, the first of which on either hand has its arch resting upon attached shafts, the remaining bays being arranged in pairs between the vaulting shafts, and springing from isolated columns with nobly foliated caps. The same type of cylindrical column serves for the support of the arches in the apse—one of a type which seems to have been pretty closely adhered to in the *Domaine Royal* during the Transitional and First Pointed epochs. As in the nave, the whole of the clerestory is sixteenth-century work, but the Flamboyant railing to the tribunes does not appear in this portion of the church.

Chapels radiate from the choir aisle and procession path. Of these, the two on either side of the Lady Chapel, which is a jejune Middle Pointed work, are very shallow semicircular projections retaining their original fenestration, while the remainder are rectangular, with window openings in various phases of Middle Pointed. Of these the most beautiful examples occur in the first two chapels opening out of the northern aisle. In that dedicated to St. Catherine, forming the eastern aisle of the transept, the window lighting its northern end has three unfoliated compartments, with, in the head, a large trefoil, and some modern glass of excellent character representing scenes in the life of its titular saint.

The next chapel opens into the aisle by two bays corresponding to those of the choir, and has a pair of lovely Early Middle Pointed windows, the three trefoils with which each is traceried being without containing circles.

None of the other projections contain anything very remarkable until the last



THE SOUTH DOOR OF THE CATHEDRAL, SENLIS



THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE EAST, SENLIS

but one in the south aisle is reached, its wall being pierced with an ogee-headed and crocketed doorway conducting to the sacristies. The baptismal chapel, in rich good Flamboyant with large pendant bosses, is formed in the eastern aisle of the south transept.

It was about six o'clock when I first entered this smallest but most charming of northern French cathedrals, and so fascinated was I with its interior that ere I had closed the door of the south transept upon such a galaxy of beauty, the simple, solemn First Pointed western façade—one of the earliest of its class, I believe, with an exquisite central portal flanked by standing effigies, having in its tympanum a sculptured Coronation of the Virgin, and several rows of busts by way of mouldings to its arch—was glowing like old gold in the gorgeous sunset.

Viewing the steeple which rises at the south side of this façade at Senlis, it is impossible to extol too highly the consummate skill with which the eye is conducted from the square to the octagonal portion of the tower, and thence to the slope of the spire. This is effected principally by concealing the oblique sides of the octagon with open tourelles somewhat after the style of Laon, Naumburg, and Bamberg, the canopies of the said tourelles leaning against its sides. Then the beautiful pyramidal character of the steeple is further strengthened by a tall squinch, of which one with its gablet is placed against each side of the spire. Such an arrangement, of course, appears to decrease the true dimensions of the spire, but is only another factor in endowing it with an air of grace perhaps unsurpassed by any contemporary erection of the kind. Seen in profile under certain conditions of light and atmosphere from the boulevards on the north side of the city, this solitary spire of Senlis, with its scaled surface so judiciously pierced, and its delicately crocketed ribs, is reminiscent of Strasburg.

Of Senlis' desecrated churches, the most beautiful, that of St. Frambourg, is now a carriage depository. The details of its western doorway are truly exquisite specimens of floral sculpture—nothing more vigorous or beautiful can be imagined. The plan of this church—a First Pointed one without aisles, and having very large lancet windows most gracefully shafted—is simply a parallelogram terminating in an apse, whose semicircular sweep with its red-tiled roofing helped, on the following morning, to compose a picture truly enchanting, standing out as it did against a sky of purest blue.

A cool ramble about the quaint streets of Senlis, and a prolonged saunter upon its old fortifications, from which at one point the spire of Notre-Dame and that of another gracefully contoured, hipped gabled steeple belonging to St. Vincent's, could be taken into one view silhouetted against the calm evening sky, completed a very pleasant reconnoitre.

CHAPTER XXVI

NOYON

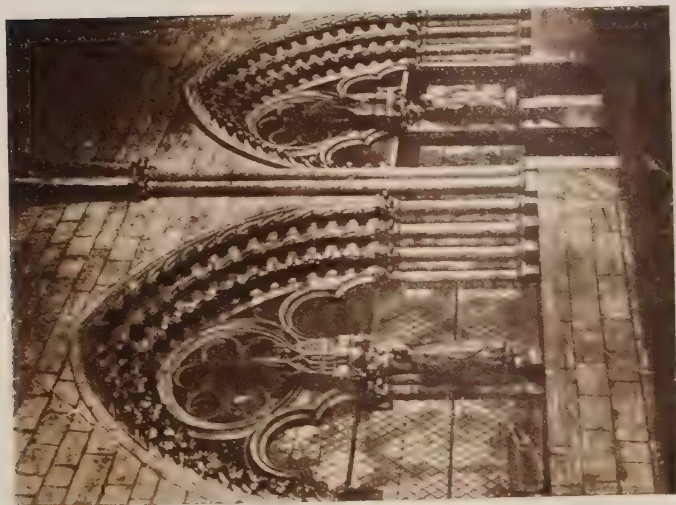
FOR a considerable time after leaving Senlis, the spire of Notre-Dame remained visible across a treeless plain. Then it was lost, the train stopping at a succession of villages, some of them with high-sounding names, and churches—not a few of which would, to those with a superabundance of leisure, prove highly interesting and instructive—having crocketed spires and lofty chancels of the Creil district type.

At Crépy-en-Valois, which had a temptingly architectural look, carriages had to be changed, and shortly after, the train passed, among others, the village of Jaux, whose small three-gabled church of red brick, with an Early Pointed spire and Flamboyant traceried windows, had a very captivating appearance. I regretted afterwards that I did not break the journey at Crépy, for at Compiègne, where I allowed myself a couple of hours, I was disappointed in the two churches of St. Jacques and St. Antoine. The former, a large Early Pointed structure, has had its interior almost completely masked in a remorselessly Rococo fashion; the latter, a commonplace Flamboyant edifice, enshrines a black marble font, similar in *motif* to those in Winchester Cathedral, St. Michael's, Southampton, and East Meon, but wanting the angle shafts.

Another short railway ride, during the progress of which I noted several churches with saddleback towers on either side of the line, and presently the two noble western steeples of Noyon came in sight.

An omnibus met the train and rattled me over the stony streets of the little city, depositing me in good time for dinner at the doors of my hotel, which combines the advantages of an excellent *cuisine* and an uninterrupted view of the choir and transept of one of Northern France's most delightful Early Pointed churches.

The summer during which I visited Noyon was one of unusual brilliancy and splendour, but a very heavy thunderstorm which broke over the city while I sat at dinner—when the western steeples stood out like two great white cliffs against a sky of inky blackness, thereby producing a very fine effect—was by no means



THE ENTRANCE TO THE CHAPTER HOUSE, NOVON



THE WEST FRONT OF THE CATHEDRAL, NOVON

NOYON

unwelcome, for it lowered the temperature without breaking up the fine weather, besides rendering a saunter round the city, upon its cessation, highly agreeable.

Although not so diversified as those of Senlis, the streets of Noyon are very old-world and enchanting. There is a fine market-place dominated by the steeples of Notre-Dame ; shady boulevards screen the old part of the city from the modern one that has grown up around the railway station ; and the streets, although ordinarily wearing an appearance of drowsiness, show no symptoms of decay. Everything in Noyon has a substantial, prosperous look, and through the *porte cochère* of many an eighteenth-century house, with its louvred and red-tiled roofs, whereon strut colonies of pigeons, glimpses may be caught of really well-kept gardens bright with vivid masses of scarlet geranium.

Dr. Johnson slept one night at Noyon on his way back from Paris, where he had been spending two months in the autumn of 1775 with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, and in the diary which he kept during this, his only visit to the Continent, the following passage relative to Noyon occurs :—"Friday, Nov. 3. At night we came to Noyon, an episcopal city. The cathedral is very beautiful, the pillars alternately Gothic and Corinthian. We entered a very noble parochial church. Noyon is walled, and is said to be three miles round." Of the "very noble parochial church" alluded to by Dr. Johnson I could find no traces, it having in all probability been destroyed, like so many others, at the Great Revolution.

One thing only Noyon lacks, and that is a grandly performed daily Office in its quondam cathedral of Notre Dame,¹ one of the most beautiful and complete monuments of the Transitional period in France or elsewhere.

Viewed from the east its most striking feature is the apsidal termination to either transept, which, together with the employment of projected steeples at the angles formed by the eastern and transeptal limbs, may be attributed either to the long connection of Noyon with the see of Tournay or its proximity to the German border.

When Nevillon de Cerisy, Bishop of Soissons, began to rebuild his cathedral in 1175 with the existing graceful apsidal south transept, he no doubt intended its plan to take the trefoil-headed shape, but his designs—with the change of style which the thirteenth century brought with it—were abandoned, the choir being made of much loftier dimensions and the opposite transept receiving the customary rectangular termination.

The rude and simple church of Querqueville, near Cherbourg, is an interesting example of a French church with apsidal transepts as well as chancel.

¹ The see of Noyon was suppressed in 1801, and, with that of Senlis, placed under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Beauvais.

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Tournay Cathedral, until the erection of its imposing but not satisfactory fourteenth-century choir, must have presented a perfect specimen of that transverse triapsal German plan which undoubtedly had the Romanesque of Northern Italy for its prototype. This apsidal transept seems to have been much admired during the epoch when the German national style held sway in the Rhenish Provinces, occurring as it does in the noble church of St. Quirinus at Neuss; in Gross St. Martin, the Holy Apostles' and S. Maria in Capitolio at Cologne; and in the minster at Bonn. Remote from the Rhine the transverse triapsal plan is not frequently met with, but it reproduced itself during Complete Gothic days in the graceful church of St. Elizabeth at Marburg. Plettenburg in Westphalia has a church of this form, and in the same province the northern transept of Paderborn Cathedral—a poor work of the fourteenth century—is pentagonally apsidal. It is not unreasonable to suppose that this church was, in its earlier form, transverse triapsal, and that during the great structural alterations which it underwent in the Complete Gothic period some lingering love for tradition may have prompted the architect to give this pentagonal termination to its northern arm.

The illustrations given of this most charming cathedral of Noyon preclude me from entering into a detailed description, but in the view of it from the east I would draw attention to the position of the doorway, which, as in some Rhenish churches, occurs in the eastern side of either transept;¹ to the curious fenestration of the clerestory in the same portion of the building; and to the double tiers of windows necessitated by the extraordinarily grandiose triforium, and of which I shall speak presently when describing the interior of this most fascinating church, whose austere western façade fitly prepares the mind for the chastened grandeur of the interior. Few great French churches of the Early Gothic period can show an exterior so little disturbed by the accretions of later ages.

Viewing the western steeples, the divergency in the detail of the gracefully elongated belfry stages will be noticed, also the noble range of Geometrically traceried windows lighting the Salle de Chapitre to the north, whilst the exquisite carving in foliage above and below the now shaftless and figureless jambs of the triple western doorways, sheltered by the simple porch extending the length of the façade, deserves the closest attention from the student of thirteenth-century detail.

Entering Noyon Cathedral from the west—though perhaps the most impressive *coup d'œil* of its interior is to be had from the threshold of either of the

¹ S. Maria in Capitolio at Cologne exemplifies this. We meet with it also at Mayence and in the eastern pair of towers at Bamberg.



THE CATHEDRAL FROM THE EAST, NOYON

transeptal portals—you are not overwhelmed as at Amiens, Beauvais, Bourges, or Chartres, but you instinctively feel yourself to be in the presence of a most charming and reposeful church—one that grows upon the mind and imparts renewed pleasure at successive visits.

Immediately you set foot in the nave a striking feature presents itself in the tall Pointed arch which opens on either hand into the space formed beneath the towers, and which, together with that spanning the church transversely, constitutes, as at Peterborough, a species of gigantic internal narthex or space distinct from the nave proper. This has ten bays of Pointed arches broken up into five couples by the vaulting shafts, each pair springing from a cylindrical shaft, with almost classically foliated capitals, similar to, but not so refined as, those at Senlis.

A series of Pointed arcades opens above the pier arches into the tribunes—spacious vaulted galleries, lighted in this instance by Romanesque windows in pairs, peculiar to several great churches of this part in Europe, corresponding to the grandly developed Anglo-Norman triforia of Norwich, Ely, and Peterborough, and affording accommodation for the spectators of processions and of those miracle plays which in mediæval times were so frequently enacted in the naves of churches.

Surmounting these is a low arcade of semi-circular arches unpierced, and, above all, a tall clerestory of very simple round-headed windows in pairs, similar to those lighting the tribunes. Such a quadruple division in height constitutes another feature borrowed, doubtless, from Noyon's prototype, Tournay. Here it is productive of a very grand effect, and perhaps nowhere in France is the struggle that was going on at the period of the church's erection (1150-70) between the Round and Pointed arch, resulting long before the close of the century in the triumph of the latter, so finely illustrated.

Laon Cathedral furnishes us with another noble instance of this quadruple division of the elevation. There it is entirely Pointed. Tournay, the Romanesque example, is very majestic, but suffers somewhat from the two lower ranges being of almost equal dimensions, while its uppermost storey, together with the roof, is poor sham Romanesque of the eighteenth century. Taken together, however, Tournay, Noyon, and Laon afford three most interesting comparative studies.

In the first three bays of the eastern limb we find both the quadruple division of elevation and the admixture of the Round and the Pointed arch; but in the apse, where the too frequent banding of the vaulting shafts hardly constitutes an agreeable feature, the latter reigns supreme. The Romanesque element, however, peeps out in the circular plan of the shallow chapels radiating from its

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processional aisle. Throughout the clerestory of the choir the simple lancet is employed with beautiful effect, and in the three central ones of the apse, a beginning of good modern stained glass has been made.

From the nave aisles there is a slight ascent of steps into the transepts, which have not the circumambient aisle possessed by the similarly planned ones of Soissons and Tournay. Here again we find the quadruple division in the elevation, the low blind arcade in this instance occurring below the portion corresponding to the tribunes in nave and choir. The walls in the lower part are relieved by tall Early Pointed arcades, some of the divisions having been scooped out to form Grecianised niches, while the door leading into either transept has been similarly Classicised, but not obtrusively. Above the southern one I read the following inscription from St. Cyprian :—

Ecclesia istic non clauditur,
Nec episcopus alicui denegatur.

This is one of the great French churches preserving the basilican arrangement, the high altar, a really imposing affair albeit Grecian, standing just under the eastern arch of the great crossing. In front of it, and extending the whole width of the transept, is the ritual choir, separated from the nave by a tall plain iron gate and side screens. The stalls for those engaged in the musical part of the Offices find room in the spacious *arrière chœur* behind the high altar.

Returning into the nave, we pass into its south aisle to find the original Doric simplicity of the twelfth-century church disturbed by a series of those Middle Pointed chapels from which few great French churches of its age are free. However, at Noyon the work exhibited by not a few of these chapels is good, and their picturesqueness somewhat compensates us for the loss of the original aisle fenestration.¹

Having paused to admire the magnificent cross views of the church to be had from various points in the south aisle, we may proceed to inspect sundry of these chapels, each of which is co-extensive with the coupled arcades of the nave. The first, counting from the west, disused at the time of my visit, is good Late Decorated, with tracery in its two windows, which in point of delicacy nearly approaches our own of the same epoch. The second chapel is inferior Decorated, its late character being indicated by great pendant bosses and by the tracery of its three windows, of which the centre one is equipped with a Radix Jesse in modern stained glass, apparently copied from an ancient example, but in which one could wish for some white to relieve the enormous quantity of positive colour. However, the poverty of this chapel's structure is in some

¹ At Sens Cathedral during M. Viollet-le-Duc's restoration the Middle-Pointed chapels were removed, and modern Transition work substituted for them.

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degree atoned for by a most elaborate reredos which, like those in certain Oxford college chapels, occupies the whole of the eastern wall-space. A wooden screen filled in with iron, simply cross framed, and fencing this chapel from the aisle, is interesting.

In the northern aisle the chapels do not present any features of much interest beyond their detail, which is earlier and better than that of the opposite series. The windows, which are all Geometrically traceried and filled with indifferent modern stained glass, "give" on to the remains of a very graceful little cloister, where a *pêle-mêle* of fruit-trees, wild and silver beeches, sombre firs, vines, and creepers spring from a carpet of rank grass. But no visitor to Noyon should omit seeing this half-deserted, half-cared-for looking spot, not only for the sake of the magnificent architectural group presented by the northern elevation of the nave and steeple, with its hipped-gabled roof and gracefully elongated belfry stage, but to study one of the loveliest pieces of Early French Gothic of its kind in existence—the entrance to the chapter-house in the western walk of the cloisters, which is here illustrated. Several times did I repair thither, so fascinated was I by the combination of nature and art, which, lovely as they appeared at the time of my visit, when the summer had more than attained its meridian, must be doubly so in early autumn, when the creepers put on their robes of flame. Indeed, so entranced was I with the whole place, both from a secular and an ecclesiastical point of view, that in taking leave of my readers I can only say to such of them as are in search of "fair, quiet, and sweet rest," go to Noyon and study its Notre-Dame, one of the most graceful and lovable, if not one of the most awe-inspiring of the "Glories of France."

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